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ABSTRACT

This summary report of the annual conference includes statements of participant concerns prepared for the planning committee, the keynote address on the impact of mass media on education by Nicholas Johnson with responses by Minaruth Galey and Jon Dunn, and reports from the groups which studied the seven subtopics identified in general sessions: (1) Characteristics of Mass Media Literacy; (2) Integrating Mass Media Literacy into the Curriculum; (3) Evaluation and Utilization of Mass Media; (4) Form and Content of Television Programming: Informal Learning; (5) Political Power and Mass Media; (6) Guidelines for Community Action; and (7) Mass Media. . .Education 2000. A participant list is provided, and a summary of the conference includes the report. (JEG)

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# Mass Media Impact on Learning

1978 Summary Report
The 24th Annual Lake Okoboji
Educational Media Leadership Conference

Iowa Lakeside Laboratory, Lake Okoboji, Milford, Iowa
August 14-19, 1978

Cosponsored by:
The University of Iowa, Division of Continuing Education, Audiovisual Center
and
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# Table of Contents


Foreword 5

Participants 7

Delegate Concerns 11

Keynote Address and Responses

- Keynote Address, Nicholas Johnson 31
- Response, Minaruth Galey 36
- Response, Jon Dunn 39
- Statement, Nicholas Johnson 43

Group Reports

- Characteristics of Mass Media Literacy 45
- Integrating Mass Media Literacy into the Curriculum 52
- Evaluation and Utilization of Mass Media 65
- Form and Content of Television Programming: Informal Learning 71
- Political Power and Mass Media 77
- Guidelines for Community Action 87
- Mass Media . . . Education 2000 95

Conference Summary 103

# Foreword

Once again educational technologists from around this country, and others, have gathered on the shores of Lake Okoboji in northwest Iowa to interact with one another and to explore a theme of particular interest to the educational and general community.

"Mass Media: Impact on Learning" was the theme for the 24th Lake Okoboji Educational Media Leadership Conference. The Planning Committee helped acquaint the delegates with the campus, with one another and with the theme. After several general sessions, the participants divided into small groups to address the seven subtopics they had identified:

Characteristics of Mass Media Literacy

Integrating Mass Media into the Curriculum

Evaluation and Utilization of Mass Media

Form and Content of Television Programming: Informal Learning

Political Power and Mass Media

Guidelines for Community Action

Mass Media . . . Education 2000

During the general discussions, a particular interest in television emerged. The powerful influence television has on our society was keenly felt by the conference members—a concern intensified by Nicholas Johnson's experience and perspective. Some subgroups chose to focus their attention primarily on television, though the reader will easily perceive the relevance of their remarks to a variety of mass media. Other subgroups openly addressed themselves to several different media. The group report on "Integrating Mass Media Literacy into the Curriculum" is a good example of this.

The following pages will present some of the occurrences of the general sessions as well as the seven subtopic reports as they were submitted by the authoring groups. The texture of this report is rich and varied. Some ideas are sparklingly fresh, others comfortably familiar. Please remember that you are reading the proceedings of a conference—brainstorms, reflections, explorations, questions, suggestions and possibilities. Use these images to catalyze your own thinking.

This published report can show you only one side of the Okoboji story, the rest is hinted at between the lines and can be glimpsed in the margins of the photos, but to be truly understood and appreciated, it must be experienced. Countless interpersonal episodes helped to forge a human understanding among strangers, a truly valuable part of our personal and professional lives.

Synergy has traditionally been at the heart of the Okoboji experience: for 24 years the combined abilities, insights, hopes, and concerns of professionals in our field have generated a special vitality, a refreshing energy which infuses the work at Okoboji and which the delegates can take with them to share with their associates at home.

I want to thank each and every one of this year's Okobojians, but, on behalf of all of us, let me extend special thanks to Rich Ingalls and his hard-working Planning Committee, as well as to the co-chairpersons, Joan Hassenflu and Ron Sutton. I am also sure that we would like to express great appreciation to Nicholas Johnson, Jon Dunn and Minaruth Galey, our keynote speaker and resource persons.

As you look through the handsome pages of this report, I think you will want to join me in thanking Kerry Dolch, Ann Clark, and Nancy Burruss for the many, many hours they have devoted to producing a publication of which we can be proud.

And, of course, from the hearts of all Okobojians goes our unremitting gratitude to Lee Cochran for his dedication and devotion to the fostering of leadership.

As Okoboji's silver anniversary approaches, I look forward to a refinement of the process through a reevaluation and renewal of its strengths.

Bill Oglesby
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# Delegate Concerns

To help the Planning Committee prepare the opening activities of the conference, each delegate was asked to respond to the following questions:

1. What, in your opinion, has been the impact of the mass media in the teaching/learning process?

2. What is the role of the educational technologist with regard to the future impact of the mass media on learning?

**SOPHIA ALDRICH (North Dakota)**

1. Mass media can reach large percentage of the population; by doing so, they create common ties between people. Mass media influence people's way of life and do not encourage individuality and creativity. Television viewing discourages the traditional forms of studying, such as reading and writing. Mass media are inexpensive to produce, considering the large audience they reach.

2. The educational technologist's role is to: educate teaching staff in the use of mass media in classrooms or in continuing education; assist instructor in obtaining quality materials and developing learning experiences around the mass media; facilitate the utilization and selection of hardware and software; demand high-quality production of mass media; and encourage the upgrading of the quality of children's TV.

**SUE BACCARI (Wyoming)**

1. One of the greatest impacts of mass media is the greatly increased amount of information available to everyone. This certainly gives an instructor a much broader subject base to work from. Mass media has, in some cases, taken the boredom out of learning—it should be a lesson to the teacher that there are many ways to disseminate knowledge. Mass media has shown that visual and audio together can accomplish a great deal. The students of today, because of mass media, have more knowledge of their world than any other generation. Television, the newest mass media, has both good and bad features. We cannot overlook the good while trying to correct the bad. People today are able to keep up-to-date on the happenings all over the world—immediately. What a fantastic thing!

2. The educational technologist is going to have to face the fact that mass media will have a great impact on learning. We're going to have to deal with television constructively. Mass media can contribute a great deal to the learning experience and it is going to be the job of the educational technologist to coordinate this impact to the teaching/learning concept.

**DOUGLAS BEDIENT (Illinois)**

1. The mass media have influenced the content of the teaching/learning process as well as the teacher and the learner. The slickness of many mass media productions is a challenge to emulate on a regular basis and that presents an on-going challenge to educators. Many of us have come to expect to be entertained while learning. The nonprint mass media have reduced the need for some learning skills which may explain certain problems with literacy. Finally, the mass media tend to emphasize certain learning activities which may not be as important in teaching/learning as other types of activities.

2. The educational technologist can assist in providing optimum utilization of the mass media which complement the learning process. Materials which exist need not be replicated. The educational technologist should also be concerned with the various levels of learning objectives. Some objectives may be mastered via the mass media, but higher order skills may need to be mastered through other learning activities. The design and development of these activities is in the province of an educational technologist.

**WILLIAM BELMORE (Virginia)**

1. One type of impact the mass media have had on the teaching/learning process has been to serve as a catalytic change agent by creating a more open and knowledgeable learning society. Students, from elementary through adult levels, are increasingly aware of what is going on about them and what they need or don't need to succeed in life. As a result, students are demanding more relevant programs, courses, and content; less time-wasting exercises, more sophisticated presentations; a variety of available learning methods and materials; and knowledgeable, understanding instructors. The direct impact of this on the teaching/learning process has been to open it up to more student participation and to make the process and its results more accessible and visible to the public at large.

2. a. To be aware of trends and developments in the use of mass media for instruction.
b. To be available and be able to plan, organize, and implement instructional programs utilizing the mass media.
c. To be able to interpret developments in the mass media field to faculty and administrators in terms of their impact on instructional programs and/or techniques.

**BARBARA BROWNELL (Nebraska)**

1. a. Immediate learner reinforcement through multimedia forms.
b. Pace—rapid turnover of new and newer forms. Also affected by the pace of television (every 10 minutes there is a break— radio the same—often the time is shorter).
c. Teacher and student accessibility to current media, i.e., public information systems (television, radio, newspapers, magazines, even paperback books) continually urge or often force participants to keep up-to-date. There is no time for a "wait and see" attitude.

2. Efficient information-retrieval systems will be the goal for the educational technologist of the future. Need will be established by the introduction of a more mechanized media center. Technologists will be trained to adapt the learner toward utilizing new tools for information. Development of skills in operating computer-based data banks and completely automated catalog searches are two examples which come to mind.

**KATHERINE BUCHER (Virginia)**

1. The mass media have produced effects in all areas of teaching and learning, including teacher education, school business services, administrative organization, basic learning theories, and classroom management. One major impact is that teachers today are faced with learners who have been exposed to a great variety of experiences through the mass media but have had little time to participate actively in these experiences; are accustomed to being entertained by the media; have had their values changed and shaped by the mass media; and are "told" by the media without evaluating the message. Thus, the mass media have issued a serious challenge to many traditional and conventional teaching practices while they have offered some exciting, new ideas which education can incorporate and develop.

2. Educational technologists must seek to find better ways to utilize mass media in the learning process and to instruct others in the proper use of these methods. They must show that all media, including mass media, are not alien to the "back-to- basics" concern and that the mass media may provide an effective and cost-efficient method of education. To do this, educational technologists must study the mass media, find the potentials for education, and inform others of these benefits.

**HAROLD BULMER (Wisconsin)**

1. Mass media has brought multimedia resources into the classroom. The teacher must help to bring about individual growth and competency in the ability to recognize the media and react to their impact.

The powerful influence of mass media is providing competition to the educational process. Yet, it potentially can be an aid as ways and means need to be sought for effective implementation.

Too many of the mass media (e.g., TV) provide only passive involvement. We need more challenge to active participation, encouragement to creativity and imagination, and, finally, some acceptance of criteria for self-evaluation.

One facet of the mass media is that they have perpetuated the idea that we have to be entertained while learning. Lifestyles, values and standards, attitudes, and the flow of information are changing due to the impact of mass media today. Mass media influence every single learner. Each individual will have to learn how to use them instead of allowing them to become a controlling force.

2. The contemporary educational technologist must find better ways to utilize mass media effectively in the teaching/learning process and, then, help teachers and students to implement methods for using mass media in their learning experiences. Some credence should be in evidence to teach skills for selecting, utilizing, and evaluating what mass media can offer.

We must be more effective liaison people to make the impact of mass media on learning apparent not only to teachers, but to administrators and school boards also. One way to do this is to become active in curriculum-planning committees to help integrate media in all learning areas and levels. Another is to assist in budget planning to provide highest quality software programs and necessary hardware.

**ROBERT CALLAHAN (Rhode Island)**

1. The mass media, especially TV, have given children such massive doses of multisensory, nonchallenging entertainment that conventional classroom activities are foredoomed to be considered boring.

2. The educational technologist should be assisting faculty members in utilizing media processes now available for school use, and should be the expert in the school community with reference to the ways education can be delivered to the public through nontraditional modes.

**CAROL CARLISLE (Connecticut)**

1. The slick format of commercial television has pressured some teachers to replace "chalk and talk" methods of teaching as students have become more sophisticated. It has threatened other teachers, leading to their resisting and negating this medium's advantages. Television program content has broadened pupils' horizons by providing information and vicarious experiences not easily acquired heretofore. However, television program content also fosters the idea of "instant learning," does not provide mastery through practice, encourages intellectual sloth and passivity, and suggests quick and easy solutions to life's problems. "Intellectual sloth" is a prime reason for the "back- to-basics" and "minimum standards" movement. Simplistic, capsulated news reporting has become entertainment, emphasizing unimportant folksy incidents, omitting in-depth examination of national and world events, sensationalizing and exaggerating news—none of which makes for an enlightened citizenry.

2. In the area of teacher training there needs to be a stronger emphasis on instructional design and strategies for positive use of mass media for classroom learning. Included in the curriculum of future teachers should be the use of computers for storage of and access to information, and methods of imparting this knowledge to their future pupils as part of research-skills (library skills) training.

Educational technologists should become more active on curriculum planning teams in public schools in order to promote the inclusion of the study of evaluation and criticism of mass media. They should make available to the teaching staff of their educational institutions the expertise to use mass media effectively for learning. Students should be motivated to become involved in their own learning through emulating mass media production. Educational technologists should become aware of the opportunities for education via local Cable TV, radio, and computers, and gain expertise to promote and use these communication formats. Educational technologists should support attempts to improve quality of commercial television program content and guard against the imposition of censorship.

**PEG CHILDS (Indiana)**

1. The easy accessibility of information coming through mass media today has made learners more aware of other cultures, world problems and leaders, new emotional experiences, and other tangibles/intangibles that perhaps would never have been experienced by them. Notice, I say learners are more "aware," not more sophisticated or smarter, or better able to cope. What is probably greatly overlooked by many educators is that although learners are seeing and hearing and reading about new experiences, they may not be aware of the impact. Nor may learners be aware that they are influenced by speech patterns, clothing, projected goals, lifestyles, behavior, and other elements verbalized or portrayed through the media. Educators in every subject area should strive to make learners consciously aware of these subtle influences, and how to integrate such influences into everyday life. Mass are here—it's too late to ignore their influence on every single learner.

2. Since mass media are here to stay and can only improve their instantaneous transmissions, receptions, and technology, the role of the educational technologist must be that of one who understands the technology and can help teachers integrate that technology into the classroom. There must be one person in every educational situation who can plot the trends that mass media/technology are taking and who can find or create the materials and resources necessary to help learners (and educators) understand how they can use mass media instead of allowing mass media to use them.

**LEE COCHRAN (Iowa)**

1. In my estimation we need to put on a hard drive in every state through the state departments of education, and our colleges and universities, demanding that every teacher, school administrator, and superintendent of schools have at least one (1) general media course before

receiving a degree. I make this recommendation because seventy-five percent of our school administrators do not know what a balanced, adequate media program is. When the budget has to be cut, the media program is first to be cut back, or eliminated in some schools, or put in the general school library for the librarian to handle. If the librarian is trained in media as well as library science, this would be satisfactory, but not the best for the school's education program.

Through state departments of education, I propose that AECT and its Board of Directors accept a challenge through the state media organizations to improve basic media education for teachers, supervisors, school administrators, and all who have influence over children K through 12 in our public schools. That, further, this be backed by research findings, so it will be important and influential in upgrading education at all levels.

I fully realize this will not be an easy task but, if we are to do it properly, it must be done if education is to improve, and in turn, school administrators, supervisors, and teachers are to understand the importance of media in education.

**RUSSELL COOK (Tennessee)**

1. We have seen a great explosion. What was running through the minds of those Manhattan project technicians when they first spied the breath-stopping mushroom cloud through dense protective glasses? Is it good? Is it evil? Does this moment signal the end or the beginning?

I would propose that . . .learners and teachers would have behaved about the same way, and with about the same results, were there no radio and television, only . . .less so—and less noticeably. The media are like great magnifiers, multiplying manyfold both our good and bad choices. What is basically sound instruction in the classroom can usually be manipulated, through simple logic, into solid mass instruction over the airways. Little victories . . .and defeats . . .become big ones. As with any great power, there is risk.

Certainly, as educational technologists, we recognize that the scale and complexity of our world's instructional needs force us to take the risk.

2. First, we need to recognize the distinction between mass media's effect on the form of education versus the content of education; the emotional issues that have stirred these waters in the past mostly involve the way that radio and television have changed what we teach our children, not how.

Second, we must develop strategies of radical, direct action for the use of the electronic broadcast media for public education, in our culture in particular. Despite the universal proclamations of their potential for teaching/learning, we are behind the times.

Third, we must substantiate our claims for the effectiveness of mass media for education with clear, documented research evidence, which the laymen can understand and appreciate (not to mention teachers and media specialists!).

Fourth, and probably most important of all, we must implement a strong, direct public relations campaign to regain the faith of the public in our progressive teaching techniques. The lesson to be learned from last year's Okoboji conference on "Back-to- Basics" is that the American people can and do influence the education of their children. If the educational establishment fails to arm our young people with the skills that our culture deems necessary to thrive and be productive, it will be rejected. As educational technologists who are expert in the teaching and learning processes and who have the knowledge required to make the right choices, we have a great responsibility to the people.

**SHERRY DANCY (North Carolina)**

1. I see mass media as an equalizing force in our society—thus becoming a gaining force for the economically disadvantaged. Mass media are a tool with which to teach and not the basis of learning. If used as a tool and used discriminately, they can become an instrument with which to teach and learn. Mass media have an advantage in that they come into the home and are received at an early age. As a result, conditioning takes place early in life to receive information in these forms. However, if commitments are made by the media toward a higher level of production and distribution of programming, mass media will become a significant instrument in educating the masses.

2. First of all, the media technologist must be thoroughly familiar with the curriculums and programs offered by the institution served, to the level of day-by-day concepts being taught. Secondly, the media technologist must be thoroughly knowledgeable of the offerings available by the mass media in advance of needs

and be able to correlate offerings accordingly. The technologist then must be familiar with research methods and resources to gain the necessary information to implement this task. Finally, the media technologist must actively participate in such organizations and seek to find sources of input to the producers of mass media, to give meaningful feedback on results as well as give further input in terms of future needs the mass media can fill.

**BETTIE DAY (California)**

1. Mass media are more than tools of instruction. Reaching far beyond this level, they are vehicles for systematic ways of designing, carrying out, and evaluating the total process of learning in terms of specific objectives. Through computer-assisted instruction, goals of individualized instruction are being realized. Teachers are able to spend more time working as professionals at essential and critical points in the learning process. Above all, mass media provides more access to education.

2. As educational technologists we must assist teachers and students in the development of criteria for evaluating various types of media used in the teacher/learner process; explore with teachers new and vital ways to utilize mass media effectively; and involve ourselves in the process of designing and producing quality instructional programs.

**WARREN DEATHERAGE (Kansas)**

1. I suspect that the mass media have had both a positive and negative effect upon the teaching/learning process. Children begin their mass media experience long before the formal schooling process begins, and they continue to absorb material from the mass media throughout their school years. This mass media experience no doubt contributes beyond calculation to their overall education. On the other hand, students develop the ability to "tune out" the mass media because of repeated exposure to the same material, commercials being the prime example of this material. This "tune out" ability must spill over into the classroom.

2. I suggest the role of the educational technologist be one of providing assistance to the classroom teacher in developing an understanding of the mass media, both in and out of the classroom; of fostering better utilization of the mass media; and of developing and disseminating mass media research to aid teachers and students in the learning process. I also wonder whether we, as educational technologists, armed with current research information, should work with official regulating agencies, national media networks, and local media channels to improve the learning experience offered by the media to children as well as to the adult population.

**LEE DeNIKE (Massachusetts)**

1. Previous to World War II, the teaching/learning process was primarily limited to the vertical transmission of the tried and true by the older teacher to the younger pupil. However, with the explosion of the mass media, particularly television, the world has witnessed an emerging phenomenon described as the lateral transmission of information. Herbert Gans of Columbia University suggests that people probably learn more about certain subjects from television than from the schools. This thought is reflected by the dramatic rise in the education level of the underdeveloped nations. On the other hand, television presents a partial and, in important ways, distorted view of contemporary society. Thus, television and, to a greater or lesser degree, the other mass media have had an impact that has been both beneficial and deleterious.

2. The rise of the mass media has challenged the educational technologist to conceptualize how these instruments for learning can be judiciously applied to formal education. There have been many false starts and a great deal of disillusionment. It is now time to explore new possibilities that are more fruitful. Certainly, the research on cognitive style argues for a variety of learning approaches. By being knowledgeable in both the teaching/learning process and the nature of the various media, the educational technologist can perform the valuable function of discerning the instructional milieu that is appropriate for a given learner under a given set of objectives. Such a role holds the promise of a more productive educational system.

**JON R.J. DUNN (Kentucky)**

1. Mass media have rendered the open agenda of the traditional practice of the teaching/learning process obsolete, and their impact has confounded the hidden agenda of the educational process. The open agenda is an orderly transmission of data. Mass media deliver more data, more content, with more interest, and in more alternative forms than education dares

muster. The hidden agenda is a transmission of values through form—obedience, punctuality, and a tolerance for boring and repetitive tasks; competition with its spinoffs of egocentricity and selfishness; a belief in THE right answer to the exclusion of alternative, equally useful, equally "right" solutions; intolerance to the different, the "alien"; and a dependence on the authoritarian, piously declaring itself the democratic. Mass media have wedged themselves between the learner and the institution, sometimes echoing the institution, sometimes violently overthrowing it.

2. Well now, a tough one! First, if the system does not respond to the obvious and continues blithely as it has, the media person—i.e., a humanistic, synthesizing media person—could well be the learner's only link with the real world in the learning process, working with real communication and discovery tools. Second, if there is to be movement, the media person—i.e., that same renaissance person doing humanizing work with new technologies—will be at the center of it, replacing "content" with new (and some valued old) "processes." Third, if the revolution intercedes, the media person had best haul off to some remote Pacific atoll,for the backlash will hit hardest on those who raised expectations most and met those expectations least.

**FRANCIS DWYER (Pennsylvania)**

1. Media generally refers to the equipment systems through which stimulation, forces, or influences act to some effect; or through which, or by which, something is accomplished. Mass media are, therefore, the substantive means by which an effect is transmitted or produced. The quantifier, "mass," in mass media refers to diffusion or distributive possibilities for reaching large numbers of people via program coverage over space and time. Often the media are confused with the information, stimulus materials, or programs carried by them. For example, many research reports on the effects of radio, films, and television attribute the effects to the media and associated instrument systems, whereas the effects actually result from the stimulus materials that are mediated, their organization and characteristics and the interactions or transactions with people who perceive the stimulus materials. In this respect the impact of mass media has not fared well in facilitating the higher or more complex types of learning activities.

2. The challenge presented to the educational technologist regarding the instructional impact of the mass media on learning is to create those conditions which have high probability for insuring that desired kinds of learning will occur. For the educational technologist the problem is to apply what is known with fair confidence about the structure and organization of knowledge; about the rates and patterns of intellectual growth; about sensory-perceptual processes, about cognitive organization, intellectual powers, and their regulation; about the dynamics of effectivity, emotionality, and motivation; about goal-oriented behavior and levels of aspiration; and about the reinforcing and interfering effects of socio-cultural environments on learning. In brief, part of the job of the educational technologist is to provide the means for interfacing and applying the known facts and principles about complex meaningful human learning to mass media in an attempt to effect optimum conditions for learning to occur.

**CEES FABER (Netherlands)**

1. Of course there is some impact. But how do you study that impact? Williams sees technology (i.e., the mass media) as a cause and as an effect. (Raymond Williams, Television, Technology and Cultural Form, London, 1974.)

My answer to the question could be: The more I read, listen to, and see mass media, the more I know that I have learned far too little about too many things.

2. Forsdale (1971) said "Learning must be painful otherwise it is not learning in the traditional way as most educators and parents often think of it."

Learning could be enjoyable, far out. Learning could be fun. But even a 'fun-medium' (Groombridge) does not guarantee that to learn from it could be fun. Still there is the "paradox of the ignorant citizen." (Brian Groombridge, Television and the People, a Programme for Democratic Participation, London, 1971.)

Does education make the citizen more or less ignorant or does it make the citizen learn to ignore unwanted things?

Same question goes for the mass media! The role of the educational technologist should be that one stays aware of the fact that mass-media-making does not become mess-media-making, as a result of filling in the blank spots in the program schedules to score as high as possible at the Nielsen ratings. They should help

to develop the role of mass media to fill in a proper, ethical, responsible, humanized way the blank spots in the minds of youngsters and elders in order to create real associates in the company called: mankind.

**JOHN S. FICK (Missouri)**

1. Mass media have provided today's learner with a wealth of information and experiences to bring into the learning environment. As a result, today's learners share a great many more common experiences, are barraged by more variables, and are called upon to "sort" and "extract" more information than ever before. At the same time, the distinction between the real and the unreal and between fact and opinion becomes more difficult for the learner to determine.

2. The impact of the mass media on learning offers the educational technologist the unique opportunity to aid the learner in developing media discrimination skills and to utilize the mass media as a motivator and information source, thereby blending the media into existing curricula. As such, the educational technologist's role becomes one of a resource person working individually or with the instructor to utilize the potential of the mass media in the classroom.

**RON FILINGER (Colorado)**

1. The mass media have provided everyone within their reach an unceasing flow of information. This information is made available via largely mechanical or technological means. It is also, initially, essentially, one-way communication. It becomes communication only at the point, and only to the degree that we, as students or citizens, respond. Whether we respond is based on multifaceted phenomena. How we respond poses the greater questions. What today's students lack is a framework within which to accept and engage given information. I do not think that the mass media have had a gross effect on the teaching/learning process largely because we have not acquired appropriate or concomitant utilization skills.

2. The role of the educational technologist in the near future should center on establishing comprehension and discernment skills which would facilitate an increased awareness. This role necessitates a broader background, an increased awareness of communicative processes, and a much greater insight into information requirements. It is only after such an acquisition that the mass media will have an impact on the teaching/learning process.

**FRANKLIN FURLONG (Washington)**

1. The impacts are mixed. The mass media certainly have removed the school's and the family's control over information, and have increased the information flow. As a result, I think more indirect teaching and learning is done than in the past—and it is more available. Another beneficial impact is certainly the exploration of visual and auditory forms of communication in radio and television. By using these forms of communication, the mass media have made learning more immediate, quick, and current.

However, learning that is encouraged through the mass media is very low level. They teach facts, but fail to encourage analysis and problem-solving. Inasmuch as the mass media just communicate information, they turn us as learners into passive consumers, not active, thoughtful people who then take some constructive action (in our personal and public lives). Then when we get to the affective domain, I think the mass media ignore or are ignorant of the effects they create, both good and bad.

2. The role of the educational technology with regard to the future impact of the mass media on learning should be one of cooperation with those who set objectives for media programming, and the public which consumes their messages. Educational technologist should seek to make educational concerns a priority with owners and directors of public mass media through helping create local programming and commenting when F.C.C. broadcast licenses are due to be renewed.

With regard to the public which consumes information through the mass media, the educational technology should work cooperatively to identify common instants and goals which can become standards which they expect media people to attain in their work.

In academic settings more research and evaluation needs to be conducted to identify the unintended impacts of the mass media on our children and young adults.

**PEGGY S. GARBETT (Iowa)**

1. As has been noted, the mass media have changed the ways in which we think, learn, and communicate. As individuals enter formal learning situations, they now bring with them experiences, thoughts, even cognitive processes

acquired through the media: in fact, the media have changed the very definition of where learning occurs. No longer the province of the schools alone, learning now is in large part delivered to the individual at home. Our schools, at all levels, have failed to account for this change. Our society as a whole, though it has indulged in much discussion, has done little in actuality to redefine its notion of learning. This seems to me to be a major task for the Okoboji group.

2. The key to the expanded definition of learning is one of actually integrating the media into formal and informal curricula. In the schools and other places of formal learning the educational technologist will be most responsible for bringing about this change and integration. As new programs are developed they must include the media, not merely as delivery systems, but as methods of triggering specific, desired cognitive processes necessary to the acquisition and assimilation of certain information. The technologist then must be well-versed not only in the operation of the hardware and its related software, but in learning theory and cognitive processes, and in instructional design and curriculum planning, so that these factors may all be considered when developing learning programs.

**BARBARA GRABOWSKI (Pennsylvania)**

1. In my opinion, television has had an impact on the learning process, however, not in the manner hoped for by education specialists. The behaviors imitated from television are not always the kind we want our children to exhibit, and the learnings are not always the ones that will help the child become a successful adult.

I do not feel the other media have played a significant role in the learning process of children since they do not have the skills to use them effectively.

As far as the impact on the teaching process, I feel that teachers have avoided using the mass media, even though there is a great potential and a great need for using the mass media to enhance the curriculum. Mass media will play a large part in the adult life, so children need to learn to understand and to use them.

2. Since I feel that the mass media can have an impact on the teaching/learning process, I also feel it is important for the educational technologists to play several roles. First, they should have some input into the type of programming available for broadcasting. Second, they should work to develop the curriculum that makes use of the content from the media. Third, the educational technologists should work toward teaching teachers how to teach children to critically evaluate the media. Fourth, they should work toward improving the content of public television and changing the attitude of the public about it. And fifth, they should work toward developing programs that would involve the parents interacting with their children and the media.

**JOAN HASSENFLU (Texas)**

1. Mass media have made us more aware of the variety of ways individuals learn. Commercial media, with large sums of financial resources, employ every possible technique for delivering messages, both obvious and subtle. The public reaction to broadcasts such as "Roots" and "Holocaust" is an indication of response to high-quality productions. When one witnesses the popularity ofmany feature films, magazines, "Pong" games, and similar types of media, we acknowledge that even poor content and/or design have power to influence an individual's thinking. A large segment of the U.S. population has suddenly decided to determine its own intellectual pursuits. People are discovering that learning can and does occur outside of formal schooling. It appears that as more and more technological devices become available for the home market, more "educational" types of software will be used by persons who will select the medium with greatest appeal to their individual preference or "learning style."

2. We, the educational technologists, must realize the importance of the skills and expertise which are ours. No other profession in the educational arena is so aware of the influence, trends, and applications of technology for learning. Each of us has a specialty: design, delivery systems, management, teaching/learning psychology, research, information science, etc. As institutions and individuals respond to the appeal of mass media and individuals continue to select programming at home, our skills increase in importance. Our leadership, influence, and knowledge become more valuable each day in a society which is rich in technological devices but poor in understanding the best applications of such sophisticated systems to the solutions of human problems.

**HAROLD HILL (Colorado)**

1. Unfortunately, the greatest part of the impact has been on the learner who has come to expect "great things" from mass media—good production, excitement, challenge, imagination, beauty, thought provocation, etc.—and the formal school room and the instructor therein have failed miserably in competing with the mass media. We have lagged much too far behind, and thus have lost the faith and trust of the students, largely—at all levels, from grade one to graduate school. We should be making far more—and especially more competent—use of the media in the classroom. The students have grown up with the media, they expect media and they get "turned off" when we don't deliver. We should, ourselves, take a lesson from the mass media, rather than decrying them as too many of our peers do.

2. The statement above applies here—perhaps more specifically than it does to the educator in general. The educational technologist has to accept a great part of the blame for the conditions I have indicated above. This is especially true of the so-called "instructional" television, it is pitiful. Likewise, the designers of instructional programs—for all of the media available to us—aren't really designers in most cases; they are merely mediators of someone else's message (which wasn't very well constructed to start with). We all need to learn more about message construct first, the application of those principles to learning second, and finally, the proper techniques and methodology for using the media to get the message across to the learner—in an exciting, challenging, and motivating manner. We, the educational technologists, have failed miserably to live up to our potential—to accept the challenge that mass media have presented us with—and we may well be the ones to blame primarily for the decline in SAT scores, decline in interest on the part of students, etc., because we aren't beginning to compete with what they see and hear and read every day from their exposure to the mass media.

**HOWARD HITCHENS (AECT)**

1. The *direct* effect of the mass media (primarily, radio and television) on the teaching learning process has been minimal. The development of both of these telecommunications media has stimulated a great deal of methodological research on their introduction and discovery by educators; but the amount of resulting usable information about the teaching/learning process has not been great.

When these media have been applied in other cultural settings than the United States, they have been much more effective in improving the general educational systems. For example, El Salvador, Mexico, and Samoa saw the implementation of television in their education systems with various results. Those experiments and many others, generally supported by the Agency for International Development, have contributed to a body of literature that seems to indicate that these media can be cost- effective as well as beneficial for improving education in developing countries.

Indirectly, the mass media have had a tremendous effect on American education. The mores and total acculturation of today's students who have been imbued with TV viewing out of school, are significantly different from previous generations. Many of our colleagues who espouse the new "visual literacy" argue that the fact today's young people perceive their world in quite a different manner from their predecessors may be attributable to the pervasiveness of the mass media.

2. The professional working in the educational technology field still has a dual role concerned with: (a) translating or introducing the products of communications technology into the American educational system, and (b) bearing primary responsibility for the improvement of the instructional process by intelligent selection of the appropriate communication media. The role should change generally from that of advocating one or more communication media (in which he or she has particular expertise) to that of working as a team member to bring his/her pedagogical expertise to bear on the curriculum development and implementation process.

**EDWARD HOWARD (Michigan)**

1. It has greatly depersonalized the process. It has changed our attitudes and altered our values, often without plan and generally not for the betterment of our society. It has empowered a few to impose many of their values on the majority.

2. To determine first what effect mass media have had up to this time on our value system. Have they had the desired effect and affect?

To determine what it is we are trying to do (and should do) to affect learning with mass media and plan and produce accordingly.

**BETTY LOU HUGHES (Indiana)**

1. Mass media have presented a challenge to education—to make information pleasing and palatable to the student. The student is bombarded with various things to gain his/her attention, especially through media, and with a multitude of things to occupy his/her mind and time. Can education compete? Can we get and hold the student's attention/can we instill within the student the desire to learn? Perhaps we need to relook at our curriculum and be sure what the child is forced to study is what he/she really needs in today's world.

2. I question the ability (time wise as well as skill-wise) of the educational technologist to produce materials for today's education. It seems this should be left to the people with the funds and techniques for developing. The technologist and educator, however, must be ahead of the game in realizing the trends of study. This will enable him/her to ask for materials far enough in advance that they can be produced, purchased and processed.

It is imperative that the educational technologist be constantly learning so that his/her knowledge and assistance will be readily available to the educators in the classrooms.

Will technology ever replace the teacher? The techniques are here now; will the control and the direction ever become a reality?

**ROBERT HUNTER (New York)**

1. As yet, the complete impact of mass media on learning is not known, but a number of probable effects can still be cited:

a. Mass media have given students a much larger knowledge base than they had in the past. For example, students often acquire the following: knowledge of sex roles, occupational expectancies, new aspiration levels, desire for particular products, stereotypes of people and events, political awareness, and altered motivation for both academic and nonacademic activities.

b. Mass media can provide students with both highly esteemed and potentially harmful values and behaviors.

c. Time spent on mass media is most often time spent away from school work.

d. The professional and aesthetic quality of most mass media can lead to student expectations which make many school instructional materials seem "dull" and "unprofessional."

e. Mass media may require and develop cognitive and information-processing skills which are different, if not in opposition to, those required in most school learning.

2. In considering the impact of mass media on learning, I see the educational technologist playing a major role in the areas of research, development, and evaluation. There is much to be learned about the true impact of mass media; this leads to a number of research questions which the educational technologist can address. What are the potential negative and positive (direct and indirect) effects of the various forms of mass media? How does differential exposure to mass media moderate these effects? What are the particular features of mass media which so engage their users and can these be adapted to benefit school learning? Are particular information-processing skills used or improved with mass media (particularly, television and film) and how do these relate to those required in most school learning?

When answers to questions like the ones above have been identified, an instructional development effort must be initiated. Materials and program development efforts should attempt to utilize the positive features of mass media while counteracting the negative features. Instructional programs can be prepared to assist both students and parents in becoming more selective and critical users of mass media. As these and other programs are implemented, there will be an ongoing need for both formative and summative evaluation which are among the tools of the educational technologist.

The ultimate goals for all of these efforts by our fields should be the creation of better users of mass media and better mass media to use. As important as the first goal is, educational technologists must use what expertise and influence they have to insure that the latter goal is not overlooked.

**ANNE HYLAND (Ohio)**

1. The extensive and easy availability of a wide variety of mass media forms has made it clear to even the casual observer that knowledge can be transmitted in any form and that learning can take place. The whole focus of cognitive style learning is a result of mass media technology. The frequent problem, however, is that the general public tends to view the mass media as primarily entertainment oriented. Such a view is often held by teachers as well, and is perpetuated

(modeled?) in their use (nonuse) of instructional media. The easy access has led people not to take media as seriously as they should. They tend to ignore the powerful persuasiveness media can have on those uneducated in the particular form. It is easy to allow the format to be the central issue, and be unaware of the information which is coming through.

2. Our role is to teach teachers ways to effectively use all media forms in the instructional process; assist in matching learner/teacher needs with appropriate resources; encourage production of media programs which are useful to the educational process; encourage the public to look beyond the format and concentrate on the content by teaching about media production techniques, and general comprehension skills.

**RICH INGALLS (California)**

1. The mass media are perhaps the most powerful single influence upon the actions of this society and its individuals. Learners are influenced more at home than at school where there is just one teacher with a chalkboard and textbook. For example, talking about the civil rights of all individuals in civics cources has done less after years of effort in schools than has one showing of "Roots" on television. Also, two generations who had generally come to believe that the German atrocities during World War II were perhaps exaggerated were made to realize the scope of that horror through one airing of "Holocaust."

2. The educational technologist has two roles in the light of this realization. First, he/she must make the power of media impact on learning apparent to teachers, administrators, and boards. Secondly, he/she must help teachers integrate media into all learning areas. Both activities can be carried on simultaneously with a primary emphasis on either area.

**MIKE JANUARY (Texas)**

1. The mass media have had no (I say again, NO) impact upon the teaching/learning process. The teaching/learning process remains unchanged or, more accurately, unidentified or only guessed at as it has been for centuries. The mass media represent a larger pipeline in which heretofore unimaginable quantities of information may be presented to the learner in highly controlled sequence of repetitious, carefully configured learning situations with an unprecedented amount of "hype."

2. The goal, as much as the role, of the educational technologist in the "educational" domain is to gain an increasing degree of control over parts of the mass media as a delivery vehicle, and to learn as much as possible about the effects of mass media and their uses from the present "ultimate" educational technologist . . .the advertising director.

**INEZ JOHNSON (Texas)**

1. Mass media have expanded the dimensions of today's classrooms as daily exposure to media has broadened out-of-school learning experiences.

2. The educational technologist must be able to assist teachers in the utilization of media in the teaching/learning process. This would include setting goals, identifying objectives, selecting appropriate materials, planning for instruction, and evaluating the teaching/learning process.

**RONALD JOHNSON (Florida)**

1. While I recognize there are negative aspects to the influence of the mass media on the learning process, I believe overall impact has been positive. The technology has been adapted for education and, faced with a generation of students heavily conditioned by the mass media, we are gradually discovering teaching methods both to counteract and utilize this powerful educating force.

2. I do not believe there has been enough meaningful research done on the real effects of the mass media in terms of behavioral changes in people exposed to the media. Educational technologists should take the lead in getting this data. Only then can they fulfill their role of supplying other educators with the tools and techniques to be used in instilling critical, discriminating, appreciative attitudes in students with regard to the mass media.

**LARRY KITCHENS (Texas)**

1. Whenever you stop to think about how you learned all that you know, the importance of media in one's life becomes startlingly apparent. Around the core of our direct experiences and the personally related experiences of the people we know, we acquire ever-expanding amounts of information from the modern media of communications. These media act as social, cultural, and educational forces in and out of the formal learning environment. They affect the role and stature of both the teacher and the learner.

The very pervasiveness of media in contemporary society tends to obscure the nature of their power. The big question is how can this power be understood and used. The place to begin the examination of media in education is with the effects of the communication media on our everyday relationships and encounters.

2. First, all learning is individual, private, and personal. While learning, individuals may be members of groups of various sizes distributed in various ways; but no matter how the learner is situated, the changes in behavior which we call learning are painfully or pleasantly private and personal.

Second, there is the difference between communication and education. Communication is more inclusive than education. That is, all education is communication, but not all communication is education. The basic goal of human communication is to have the message which is received correspond as closely as possible to the message intended. All other goals derive from this one. The basic goal of education is communication which the educator believes to be desirable. Education without the application of good communication theory is ineffective; communication not informed by the goals of education becomes sterile.

The central problem, as far as the role of the educational technologist and the mass media, is that of determining how they can be best adapted to meet the requirements of effective learning. The educational technologist, along with the other members of the "learning" team, must then pull together and take us beyond Babel.

**JUDITH MEYERS (Ohio)**

1. a. Is changing the culture and society in which teaching and learning take place at a rate more rapid than most of us have known before.
   b. Is one of the most important influences on intellectual activities.
   c. Is influencing the way children respond to their environment.
   d. Has created new opportunities for teaching and learning.
   e. Provides a common denominator for teaching and learning.
   f. Enriches both students and teachers.
   g. Has caused changes in the patterns for use of "leisure" time.
   h. Has broadened the "average" view of the world.
   i. Tends to create stereotypes and narrow value systems.
   j. Poses something of a threat to many teachers.
   k. Has been cited, rightly or wrongly I'm not sure, as a major factor on decline of test scores.
   l. May be a contributor to some of the speech, hearing, and language development problems.
   m. Contributes to current lack of confidence in public institutions.
   n. Tends to reduce discrimination between reality and fantasy.
   o. May contribute to what seems to be abbreviated attention span.
2. a. Identify programming of significance to teaching/learning.
   b. Disseminate information about such programming to instructional/adminstrative staff, parents/students.
   c. Assist teachers and students use mass media for teaching/learning.
   d. Make available, in accordance with copyright laws, selected programs for teaching/learning.
   e. Participate in the public, social/cultural/intellectual dialogue fostered by mass media.
   f. Help parents learn to understand and use mass media with their children.
   g. Use mass media to foster better public relations for educational institutions and for educational media programs.
   h. Perform as liaison between schools and mass media organizations.
   i. Study the mass media and their impact on teaching/learning.
   j. Adapt ideas from mass media for educational purposes.
   k. Instruct in the production, selection, and utilization of mass media.
   l. Help young people find and enjoy alternatives to mass media especially in the use of their "leisure" time.
   m. Help create and/or support programming with positive social/cultural/intellectual values.
   n. Help children/teachers/adults become more constructive in their criticism of mass media.
   o. Ponder the problem of what to do about mass media, about which the case for negative effects seems to be mounting, in a society which believes in freedom of communication, freedom of access to information, and the rights of individuals in both respects.

**JERRY MOCK (Georgia)**

1. Mass media, in the form of print and electronic media, have had an enormous impact on what we learn and what is taught. School-age children through college adults have had the world open up before their eyes as never before. Mass media has brought, to our eyes and ears, events as they happen. Is this a good thing? I hope Okoboji will help me as a media specialist and teacher to answer this question.

2. As an educational technologist, I have to make these resources and the means by which these resources can be used, available to the users. I have to be more aware of what is happening in my community, state, and nation in order to harness this information and make it available to the user.

**PHYLLIS MYERS (South Carolina)**

1. It is suspected that the impact of mass media has primarily been on children's attitudes. However, magazines, newspapers and especially television present information visually, thus developing skills in receiving and interpreting visual messages. Therefore it is logical to believe that children's learning modalities may be affected by mass media, especially television. Entering school children not only have attitudes concerning violence, sex, and adult roles, but they may have established strategies for learning from visuals. The probability is high that the existence of visual language skills affect school learning, either negatively or positively.

Educators are slowly becoming aware of the need to provide curricula and instruction based upon the learning modalities of individuals. Many educators use television, magazines, newspapers, radio broadcasts, and recordings in their instructional strategies. However, we educators are still naive as to the effect of mass media upon cognitive abilities. In my opinion, mass media does have impact upon the teaching/learning process, but neither the direction nor the quantity of the impact is known.

2. The educational technologist should be aware of the impact of mass media upon learning. Information concerning the development of cognitive and affective learning should be considered for all phases of instructional design, development, and evaluation. The educational technologist should present information and empirical evidence to those persons responsible for curriculum development and instructional planning.

**JOHN NUGENT (Missouri)**

1. Of the mass media, television has undoubtedly had the greatest impact. Some feel that its biggest effect has been on the cognitive strategy of the learner, making him/her more gestalt as opposed to linear in his/her approach. While this may be true, I feel the most immediate and observable effect of TV has been to jade the learner. He has "seen it all" and has come to expect a great deal every time the switch is turned on.

2. I don't feel that the mountain will come to us; we must go to it. Since we cannot greatly affect commercial TV, we must learn to use it as it exists. We can exploit some of the conditioning and visual literacy which it has imparted to our learners. And we can attempt to teach our learners to be more judicious consumers of the medium. It is incumbent upon not only educational technologists but on all responsible members of our society to ensure that if the mass media's impact cannot be beneficial to learning, it will, at least, not be detrimental.

**ADEBAYO OGUNBI (Michigan)**

1. This question may also be asked this way: in terms of learning and instruction, have the mass media been persuasive or merely pervasive? The answer, in my opinion, is that they have not been persuasive without the intervention of the human factor. Without meaningful participation of the human element, learning may still occur but it is merely incidental to other stronger factors such as entertainment. Media become very effective when considerd as a strategic component of a total instructional plan. Research has shown that mass media (especially television) can teach and children can learn without the help of instructors, but the question is how many schools have television and other media completely taken over?

2. The role of the educational technologists in the future effort to use mass media in teaching and learning should be more than a convenience brought into the educational system when the school can afford it. They need to broaden their areas of competencies and become seasoned "human relations" experts so that they can effectively sell their potential users (teachers) and policy-makers (administrators) on the need to use instructional resources. Of what value are prepared resources if they are never used? They should be sufficiently certificated and be competent generalists who can participate in the

decisions likely to affect their interests. Indeed they should be ready to take over the administration of the whole system where the opportunity arises. It is by having a chance to head policy- making bodies that we can protect our own interests while trying to introduce changes that would bring improvement.

**AWILDA RAMIREZ (Puerto Rico)**

1. The mass media have been a challenge as well as a new avenue to cope with in the teaching/learning process.

2. The role of the educational technologist with regard to the future impact of the mass media on learning will be that of a designer, an innovator, and an evaluator for professional educators.

**JOYCE SCHNEIDER (Arkansas)**

1. In my opinion, mass media have had the most far-reaching effects on the teaching/learning process, when compared with other methods of the education process. Mass media have both enhanced the social sciences and enlivened the natural and biological sciences. Students today are sophisticated in the use of media as never before. Teachers have a ready tool to bring the world into their classrooms. Administrators have the opportunity to implement an ever-new, fresh approach to learning. Patrons have the challenge of supporting and encouraging all of these efforts. Mass media can BE, with a total team effort.

2. The educational technologist, with regard to the future impact of mass media on learning, must become a key person on the educational team. He/she must be aware of the technical aspects, the availability of quality materials, and, most important, the curriculum needs of their community. This person must be supportive of many disciplines and endeavors, and service, dedication, and enthusiasm must be his/her guide words.

**TONY SCHULZETENBERG (Minnesota)**

1. The mass media have had a significant impact on education, but not nearly as great an effect as they might. Until such time as teachers learn to use the media effectively, the media's impact will not be felt as it might. Since much of the mass media come through the visual mode (i.e., television, television, photojournalism, etc.), the effectiveness which we might have achieved has not been realized because of the inability of the teacher to deal effectively with other than the written word.

2. The role of the educational technologist is to help teachers in using the mass media in the instructional process. This presupposes a certain level of competence for the educational technologist in verbal and visual literacy. It also requires the ability to communicate effectively with all of the modes of communication. In addition, it requires that the educational technologist be able to help the teacher in developing these skills (listening, reading, and viewing), for only then can we hope to use the mass media effectively in the classroom. This kind of help for teachers will have the two-fold effect of making them better teachers and enabling them to teach students to develop these same skills in independent learning.

**GARY SHEELEY (South Dakota)**

1. An important, easily observed impact is the extent to which students are visually oriented as they enter the education process. The mass media have introduced the thought that even the most complex of problems may be solvable in a small time frame.

The use of the mass media in such a major part of everyone's life has caused us to be much more deliberate in delivering of information in the teaching/learning process. Even though we are continually threatened with budget cuts, we must push for more effective and acceptable forms of technology in education.

2. The technologist must recognize the environment in which the students are growing in and adapt the education process in such a way that maximum learning can take place. We also must become actively involved in a campaign to assist the mass media in developing programs and formats that are more acceptable in the learning environment.

**KENNETH SILBER (Illinois)**

1. a. Mass media have created a new type of literacy and grammar which the entire population must learn to both understand and use.
   b. Mass media have affected the environment and people involved in the instructional process. They make it possible to replace, or drastically alter, the role of the classroom and the teacher. Further, they make the role of the educational technologist (including instructional developers, media producers, and media managers) more central to the instructional process.

2. To fulfill this central role, educational technologists must perform or read research on the grammar of mass media; perform instructional development for mass media; develop logistics patterns appropriate for using mass media for instruction in all settings; and develop utilization patterns appropriate for using mass media as "mediated instruction."

**SHARON SIMMONS (Illinois)**

1. The mass media have had an enormous effect on the teaching/learning process. In a positive way, the media have opened windows on a world which many people would not otherwise have been able to view, or even to imagine. Today's average person has become an observer to activities which years ago were known about only by a chosen few who held positions of power. Surely, a knowledgeable society is a better society. At the same time, however, people in today's society have the tendency to be observers and not participants in much of today's activities. This lack of involvement can be blamed, at least partially, on the mass media. Media, and their overwhelming abundance in our lives, have caused an "I am not significant by myself" attitude in many citizens and students. Learners in the school, and many adults, do not read as well or as much as they did years ago. The learning process, at some levels, has to be as entertaining as television in order to capture a child's attention. The young learner cannot always distinguish between fantasy and reality and is, therefore, sometimes confused about what he/she is to respond to in a formal educational setting. The presence of mass media in students'lives can also cause a high level of frustration in the material realm of their life patterns. Changes in attitudes have been accelerated in today's society, as well. These changes have been reflected in the students' behavior in the instructional setting.

2. The educational technologist can, and indeed must, have a role in deciding the future impact of the mass media on learning. The trained professional should be able to help not only teaching staff and pupils, but also parents, in evaluating what they hear and see so that everyone can best use and appreciate the good things within media. We must, as a professional group, insist that the media used in education are as well appreciated—but also better evaluated—as that which are used in a noneducational setting. Educators, as a whole, must be ever on guard when using media in the school setting; poor uses will make learning less effective. The educational technologist can help teaching staff and learners in utilizing the best of the mass media at the appropriate time, thanks to the possibility of taping and storing programs until the educational need is timely. Refinements in technology should lead to even better future uses. Attention must always be given to the validity of the goals to be achieved by technology in an educational setting and in the total development of the learner in his society. We must know what has been developed, what is in the process of being developed, and be able to evaluate the best uses for those developments in a learning situation. Finally, the professional must have his/her voice heard by legislators and government agencies so that people in those positions of authority realize that only the best things are good enough for the students of all ages in our land. The educational technologist must make all people in our society aware of our ability to make the educational process better, easier and, yes, even more enjoyable.

**CAROLYN R. SKIDMORE (West Virginia)**

1. Mass media have not made a significant impact on the teaching/learning process. However, I feel mass media have made an immeasurable impact on the learner; therefore making the teaching/learning process, as educators practice it today, antiquated. Schools receive students that are more sophisticated than ever before because of mass media. Since when in history have students had their backyards increased to the size of the universe? However, the formal teaching/learning process still treats students as if their individual "space" is that area that surrounds the school desk.

It is believed by many that mass media, specifically television, have made an impact on the teaching/learning process and particularly the learner, but "we ain't seen nothing yet." (Refer to the July 3, 1978, issue of *Newsweek*.) The forms of mass media that have made the greatest impact in the last 500 years on the teaching/learning process are books, periodicals, and talking movies.

2. The present-day role of the educational technologist is to decide just how mass media can be utilized effectively in the teaching/learning process. The role tomorrow for the educational technologist will be to implement methods for using mass media in the teaching/learning process. It is also up to the technologist and the instructor to teach skills for selecting, utilizing,

and evaluating what is offered by the mass media.

We (educational technologists) are too late to initiate influence on the learner with mass media (TV, radio, telephone, movies, computers, newspapers, periodicals, books, advertising, etc.). It is up to us to harness that influence and use it in the teaching/learning process. And if we don't do it soon, the lay citizen will do it for us as evidenced in an article entitled "TV Tomorrow" in Newsweek (July 31, 1978, pp. 62-74).

**DON SMELLIE (Utah)**

1. a. Less study time for learners.
   b. Less preparation time for teachers.
   c. Better prepared learners in terms of communication skills.
   d. Better informed learners.
   e. Generally more sophisticated learners.
   f. More analytical learners.
   g. Learners that expect to be entertained.
   h. Better variety of materials among the mass media from which to draw for educational uses.
   i. Spinoff materials from mass media have positive effect on the teaching/learning process.
2. a. Adopt and adapt techniques used by the mass media which are effective for education.
   b. Analyze mass media techniques for use in the classroom.
   c. Prepare learners to be proper consumers of the mass media.
   d. Research mass media methods for adaptation to education.
   e. Develop cooperative programs with mass media industries which benefit the teaching/learning process.
   f. Work with the mass media organizations to infuse educational experiences and materials into their normal programming.
   g. Work to have educational technologists employed in the mass media industry.

**LOTSEE SMITH (New Mexico)**

1. Mass media have caused us to become more sophisticated in our teaching process. We've livened up our act with many forms of media. The use of audio and visual aids has increased the pace of the teaching/learning process.
2. a. To control it! i.e., capitalize on it/use it to our advantage.
   b. To channel it into effective learning modes.
   c. To use it efficiently.

**JANET SPRAGUE (Massachusetts)**

1. a. Mass media have a broad and subtle effect on society and the teaching/learning process.
   b. Mass media influence public opinion, values, and attitudes, and have changed the use of leisure time.
   c. Mass media have created greater general knowledge and awareness—individuals share a common background via indirect teaching and learning.
   d. Learner has become accustomed to passive entertainment, to being "told," and to instant learning with quick and easy solutions to problems.
   e. Learner has difficulty in problem solving, analyzing, evaluating, and discriminating between reality and fantasy.
   f. Learner appears to be less individualistic and creative, has a more limited attention span, and has less patience with the practice necessary for mastery of basic skills.
   g. Mass media have created new methods for teaching and learning.
2. The educational technologist should:
   a. become resident expert on mass media and identify worthwhile items for use by teachers/learners;
   b. promote the utilization and integration of mass media form, content, and techniques in the teaching/learning process in all areas of the curriculum;
   c. help teachers/learners to develop skills in listening, reading, viewing, and critically evaluating various media forms;
   d. assist teachers/learners to effectively select, use, and produce all media forms;
   e. encourage a wide and varied use of media for recreational as well as instructional purposes;
   f. assist in the design and development of activities related to media and learning problems;
   g. interpret mass media and their educational uses and drawbacks as well as any trends and developments which may affect education to teachers, learners, administrators, parents, and the community;
   h. support production and use of high-quality media; and
   i. find out more about the effects of the mass regards them as a means of entertainment, not

**SUSAN STAPLES (Louisiana)**

1. The mass media have had tremendous impact on education in the socialization process, but

only minimal impact on formal instruction. This impact has both positive and negative aspects.

Television, in particular, has made a vast contribution to socialization of Americans. It has raised the level of knowledge for all, but because of commercial sponsorship and violence or stereotypes in programming, it has also caused misconceptions and distortions of reality—especially for young children. As for the positive aspects of TV in the instructional process, the potential of this medium has been utilized only to a very limited extent. Certain projects, however, such as "School Without Schools" in Columbus, Ohio have demonstrated the remarkable capacity of TV for instructional purposes.

2. a. Seek better quality programming in commercial TV and program development for educational/instructional materials.
   b. Develop curricular programs which will educate children to watch commercial TV with greater discrimination and awareness.
   c. Provide leadership for inservice training of teachers on effective utilization of television and other electronic media.
   d. Strive to overcome attitudinal factors which have negatively affected use of all electronic media (TV, film, recordings, etc.). Society regards them as a means of entertainment, not education. Misuse has caused biased attitudes on the part of administrators.

**ROBERT STEPHENS (Arkansas)**

1. Adaptations of the mass media to the classroom have provided educators with tools that have been proven to be highly effective in teaching and learning. Students of today, from kindergarten through graduate school, have been exposed to the all-pervasive mass media most of their lives. They are better informed about current events and world conditions and have a greater listening vocabulary than pre-TV generations.

At the same time there seems to be a corresponding decline in reading and writing skills. Also observed has been a declining ability to play and think with creativity and imagination, possibly due to a passive involvement with ready-made plots and life styles viewed on TV. Also, students first entering school may be disappointed to learn that their teacher can't compete with "Sesame Street." Yet, the mass media, when properly used, have proved beneficial in learning. Their full potential has not yet been realized.

2. The number of home videorecorders purchased in 1977 (approximately 250,000) is estimated to be five times the total of all videotape machines purchased at all levels of education during the previous 15 years. Their value is touted as devices for entertainment, education, and training. As they become more prevalent, more materials, both educational and entertainment, will be produced and home study will become an important facet of education. Finally, the schools will see the need and they will begin to become involved in the technology of the mass media.

Courses will be evolved about responsibility of the mass media, development of discrimination skills related to good and bad programming, and how to recognize deceptive advertising. These could become part of the curriculum for all. Instructional technologists will become more involved in designing of systems and materials, curriculum development, copyright regulations, and teaching selection, evaluation, and utilization of materials. More instructional technologists will need to be trained because of their defection to industry, government, and military-training programs and to the educational mass media industry itself. A national curriculum as envisioned by Finn may even materialize.

The schools are going to be energized from without by the mass media, so change is inevitable. Yes, we, the instructional technology specialists, will have a place of importance in education because of the impact of the mass media.

**RUTH STIEHL (Oregon)**

1. The direct impact of mass media on the teaching/learning process has been relatively minimal compared to its impact in shaping learner expectations and responses. Intensive research efforts must be conducted to better understand the impact of electronic media on the learner, and only then can we make some other than intuitive decisions about the teaching/learning process. With more research documentation of learner characteristics, perhaps we would determine that methods used in schools should be distinctively different from those employed in mass communication (perhaps as a counterbalance). Is it unthinkable to consider that our methods should emphasize more personal interaction, print orientation, and mental discipline?

2. Ideally, the educational technologist should be neck deep in basic research dealing with learner characteristics and the effects of different instructional strategies on learner performance and attitudes. Realistically, decisions must be made daily and the practicing technologist can contribute by promoting a systematic approach to instructional decision making; proposing alternatives for the teaching/learning process; establishing reliable processes for collecting and using feedback; coordinating technicians and their hardware; and putting human feelings and concerns above the thrust to structure and mechanize teaching and learning.

**MICHAEL SULLIVAN (Maryland)**

1. Mass media have had very little effect on the formal learning process. The primary effect to date has been indirect, with schools attempting to cope with children who have been affected by mass media. Media remain the auxiliary to "real" instruction, viewed in much the same light as field trips and guest speakers.

Learners, on the other hand, have changed greatly. The improvement in ability to process visual information has been accompanied by an apparent decrease in ability to process written messages. Even activity levels seem affected as children relate every experience to the electronic experience. Schools have responded primarily by denouncing the effect of television and demanding greater print literacy.

2. Reacting to the desires of uninformed policy-makers, the educational technologist has failed as an "educational servant." The future will require advocates and change agents; people willing to influence public opinion and affect the policy-makers.

Educational technologists must become administrators, supervisors, and curriculum developers. They must cause change from within the structure of public education. This requires professionals who are educators first—educators who understand the instructional process, the politics of public education, and the capability of media. They must also influence the media and force them to be responsive to education.

**RON SUTTON (Washington, D.C.)**

1. It's given us opportunities we are not seizing. People need help in understanding the mass media, their beneficial and destructive role in society. Students of all ages have enormous informational input, and now need lots of help in ordering and questioning that information. Persons need help in understanding how their attitudes and behavior have been conditioned by the mass media. Persons need encouragement as to how they can control mass media and not be controlled by it. Its impact on teaching/learning has been immense, but the fallout is still sifting down slowly on us.

2. To be sensitive to how little both students and teachers know about the mass media. How limited students' perceptions of media reality are and how much they need involvement in media processes to fully grasp media's power and weakness. The best way to understand media is to do it! Programs in media education for audience awareness should be K-adult and include hands-on experience in sound-image "reading and writing." Media literacy is the fundamental role I see for educational technology humanists of the future.

**SUNGLAN WANG (Ohio)**

1. Due to the complexity of causal relationships and the lack of defensible control groups, research on the impact of mass media on teaching/learning, by and large, still continues to be inconclusive. However, educators are well aware of the fact that for most youth today's education no longer is limited to the schools; it takes place outside the schools through new channels. Students come to school with values and ideas shaped by a media culture. This new generation is more sophisticated in terms of their values, intelligence, and modes of learning. Several tangible impacts of the mass media on teaching/learning are:

   a. The equalization of the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged as a result of the accessibility of television sets.
   b. The shorter attention span of students.
   c. The different ways of absorbing information which allow teaching/learning to be more individualized.
   d. The changes made possible in teaching methods to be less didactic, utilizing more of an inquiry approach.
   e. The demands for changes in the teacher's role.

2. As the influence of mass media increases, the role of media technologist becomes more significant and indispensable. By possessing the knowledge of modern theories of communication and education, the media technologist has great potential to integrate the mass media into education and to disseminate this information to

all parties concerned: students, teachers, administrators, as well as parents. First, the media technologist should have an in-depth knowledge about the nature and characteristics of the contemporary culture and how it affects the development of mass media. Secondly, the media technologist should look into the research findings in communication, educational sciences, sociology, and other areas which are pertinent to the future impact of mass media. He/she then must translate them into classroom practice, i.e., helping teachers to understand the different learning styles of their students and to individualize their instruction, if necessary. Thirdly, the media technologist should help students, teachers, and parents to become more critical about the selection and utilization of mediated materials in teaching/learning.

**JANET WHITAKER (Arizona)**

1. Mainly, I feel the mass media have undermined the teaching strategies of teachers, unintentionally of course. Because of the extreme visual nature of television and film and the totally aural nature of radio, children and many adults have become passive learners in their own homes. Why "work" at school when all you really need to do is look and/or listen at home, alone, near the kitchen, without restriction? Traditional education has suffered by losing a race it did not anticipate or, perhaps, even know it had entered. The first instructional design premise has been outdone by mass media motivation and attention of the audience is gone by default.

2. It is the educational technologist who must assist education in the next heat. If public school educators expect to regain their fast-declining position as the major influence on the education of children, they have a few choices to make. They may change the mass media to meet educational standards; change the educational process to meet the needs of students; and/or remain passive and dogmatic in their methods and watch their jobs disintegrate before their eyes because of a disenchanted public.

The last option is where we are today. First option is practically impossible because it would take federal intervention, a contradiction to the idea of state educational control (and the taxpayer revolt to finance it would crumble Mt. Rushmore). Second option remains, and educational technology and its practitioners can do the job. The skills and ideas are theirs. It is up to the educators to cooperate and use the resources that now are available to them as well as to the mass media.

**RICK WILLIAMSON (West Virginia)**

1. Mass media have brought more of the real world into the learning environment. Through delayed use and accrual transmission of events shaping our times, media have become such an integral part of our learning environment that it is almost "Ho hum!"

2. More and more, media will be reaching larger audiences as our whole populace interested in education expands into every age bracket. As the audiences become larger, so will the need to be more specific in what is presented and/or produced. Here, I think, the educational technologist must step in and play the important role of guiding the non-media-oriented person into relevant and timely use of media to meet the student's needs outside the classroom.

**WILLIAM WINN (Canada)**

1. a. Linear (traditional) thought processes have been replaced to some extent by less structured, more impressionistic ones.
   b. TV is providing competition to teachers for children's attention.
   c. Learners are aware of more ways of communicating their own ideas, and like to try them.
   d. Learners expect immediate (Kojak-like) solutions to problems. They are easily frustrated.
2. a. Develop "civil defense against media fallout" in young children.
   b. Use mass media distribution systems for more high-quality educational material.
   c. Research the impact of TV in cultures just acquiring it.
   d. Make teachers and learners aware of the "grammars" of the visual mass media.

# Keynote Address and Responses

**Nicholas Johnson**

Before we talk about the impact of mass media on education, it's useful to take a look at the impact of mass media on society in general. Education is but a part of that society. It's a function within it. The reach and impact of the mass media are really rather formidable. They have restructured the society in a great many ways that educators have to take into account.

Last evening we got into some effort to define "mass media." As a general semanticist, I'm prepared to define it any way you want. I don't care. But however you define "mass media," it is useful to have some word or phrase that describes communications going from a very few to a great many with relative instantaneity. That would tend to include television, radio, newspapers, and magazines. If you want to use the phrase to include the classroom, libraries, films, and so forth, that's fine. But then I would like another word to describe this quality of instantly going from two or three individuals to millions with a tremendous impact. Whatever you want to call that, it's what I want to talk about—with particular emphasis on television. I do so not only because that's the field in which I'm principally working, but because it would have to be considered one of the greatest in terms of its impact and is, therefore, a useful one to single out.

There are a number of ways in which television, or television and radio, or mass media as I defined it, have an impact.

For starters, let's talk about economics. That's where we seem to begin in this country. The economic impact of radio and television is formidable. I put its cost to the American consumer at about $15 billion a year. About $8 billion of that is excess product costs. That is what you pay whenever you walk into the drug store or the supermarket and you buy products advertised on TV.

Broadcasters talk about "free TV" as a way of contrasting it with cable TV, or subcription or pay broadcasting, but the fact is that we're paying and we're paying plenty for the commercial television we're now getting. The problem is that we don't control it. We pay for it whether or not we watch it. We pay for it when we buy products that are advertised on television.

We spend about $4 billion a year on TV sets. We're spending untold billions on repairs and antennas. If you figure something like 20 million homes with cable television at about $100 a year, that's another $2 billion a year for cable. The electric power to operate the television sets is running something like $1.2 billion a year.

But, in some ways, the biggest expense is the labor cost associated with watching television. Now, you don't get paid for watching television. You are sold by the broadcasters to the advertisers like cattle. But you don't get any of that money any more than the cattle do.

We're now talking about a work force of 200 million Americans, not 70 million, because virtually everyone watches TV. And we're talking about people working seven days a week, not just

five, because they watch on Saturdays and Sundays. Suppose you're watching a mere 20 hours a week, and that's pretty low—scarcely three hours a day counting the weekends. That is 1,000 hours a year. That is a half-time job. A full-time job of 40 hours a week, 50 weeks a year, is 2,000 hours a year. Television takes three times the entire American work force and gives them a half- time job. That's 200 billion hours we spend working for television, watching TV. If we got paid even $3.00 an hour for watching, you're talking about $600 billion a year—over half of the nation's entire gross national product.

Another way the mass media have had an impact on our society is time. We have more homes with television sets than have bathtubs. The average set is running some seven hours a day. Individuals average three to four hours a day. This means that by the time the average five-year-old enters kindergarten he or she has already received more hours of instruction from television than that child will later spend in a college classroom earning a B.A. degree. And they're not even in kindergarten yet. The average person of 65 will have spent the equivalent of nine full years of life watching television.

What's the impact of all this on the family structure? It's enormous. Television affects how much sleep we get, when we eat, what we eat, the process of socialization, the process by which a child becomes a human being.

Our children now learn from this machine, the television box. Somebody did a study and came up with the conclusion that the average father is spending seven minutes in uninterrupted time per child per week. I question whether that's enough to pass on the whole of Western civilization. And in many families, watching television together is the only common family activity. It certainly has affected relations between husbands and wives, in terms of shared experience, time spent just talking over the day's affairs.

What's television's impact on politics and government? I once ran for Congress, a little east of here. And let me tell you, the bumper stickers are no problem. The problem is that television time. That's what costs the thousands of dollars. And reflect upon the fact that this is the only civilized society that even permits, let alone requires candidates for office to go out and buy television time. In civilized nations of the world that time is made available free. Candidates are forbidden to buy time. That single act would totally wipe out virtually all of the problems associated with big money in politics. If you don't have that expense, you've wiped out about 75 percent of the cost of running for office. What's happened with federal funding of the presidential campaigns is that now all that special interest money is going into Congress. So the thousands of dollars that used to be spent to buy off the President are now being spent to purchase the Congress.

Once you get elected, access to radio and television is the process by which you govern. Much of what the White House staff does is to figure how you're going to get the President on the evening news. They have a helicopter service to ferry the tape and the films for the networks if necessary. You arrange where you put the President to make nice visuals. That is one of the major ways in which Carter exercises such leverage as he has over Congress: by going to the people with a television appearance or press conference. He can't do that without the acquiescence of the networks, which says something about the political power they have. The political power broadcasters have over the members of Congress and the Senate is even more extreme. The only way those guys can get elected is through those broadcasters.

How about television and health? We spend some $600 million a year for research on cancer and heart disease, two of the leading killers. And yet, as most of the people doing the research will concede, there's very little their research is going to cure. We know how to reduce the incidence of heart disease and cancer. We know that if you take carcinogenics into your body you get cancer. Heart disease we know to be correlated with a high intake of cholesterol, lack of exercise, cigarette smoking, and so forth. Prevention is something we have to do ourselves.

What does television tell you about those very basic health precautions? What television tells you is not to worry. Health is found outside rather than inside you. It is found in an authority figure. It's to be found in new technology. It's found in a new pill. It's found in magic.

Television's impact on mental health is one I think most tragic and poignant.

There's a common philosophy that runs throughout what educators are trying to do; much of what art, and drama, and poetry are about, most of the world's major religions, psychology, and psychiatry—and it has to do with

the potentiality, the perfectability, of humans. We are all individuals unique in our own way. We can be developed and improved. Solutions are found within ourselves. We need to develop our own skills and resources. There's no telling what we could be if we could develop fully aesthetically, or athletically, or intellectually. There are ways of working through disputes with people in cooperation and conciliation.

Television's common theme is not that you are an individual but that you are a part of a mass; not that the solutions are within you, but that they are outside; not that the measure of success is what you make of your life, but what products you acquire. Well, that doesn't work very well. It leads to more and more frustration. The more frustration it leads to, the more products you buy to relieve the frustration, and then the worse it gets.

Notice that every commercial is a commercial for all products. It is a commercial for a lifestyle. It is a commercial for a theology. When you see a furniture wax commercial in a $250,000 home, you realize all those home product commercials are brought to you by realtors. What they're selling you is the $250,000 house. Once you buy the house, you have to get the carpeting, the drapes, the dishwasher, the dishwasher detergent, and the wax or you couldn't live in a house like that.

What's the impact of all this on education? My mother is always complaining that I never say anything nice about TV, so I desperately tried to come up with the following:

1. We have received a lot of technical and equipment innovation from the Department of Defense and others who work on the commercial side of equipment development.

2. There are techniques of presentation that have come out of this—greater emphasis on color, some in graphics, the computer graphics business, the split screen instant replay and all these kind of techniques.

3. We've had widespread public exposure to the new technology and new techniques of visual communication with a relatively high degree of acceptance of that technology and those techniques. That means to the extent you want to use it as educators, you have an audience that accepts it.

4. We have a lot more people in the business of producing film and videotape, certainly more than 20 or 30 years ago— particularly with 1/2" and 3/4" tape—with porta packs and what not In many grade schools and high schools as well as colleges and universities.

5. We have a lot more software than we had before in terms of television programs and films. Certainly the whole development and emphasis on public broadcasting in the last ten years brought a lot of material into existence.

6. We've seen more interest in development of courses about the media in schools and outside of schools. There's a Television Awareness Training course being put on. There are public organizations—the PTA, and my own National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting—that have been involved in monitoring television programs. Somewhere I read that somebody was using scripts from Hollywood television shows as a way to encourage children to read and write, since they were more familiar with the TV scripts than they were with books.

The negative impact of TV on education is also there. I've hit on much of it already. One of the most obvious is simply the amount of time it takes. Some kids are spending as many as five hours a night watching television. Obviously if they're doing that, they're not doing their homework.

Secondly, there is an alteration in attitudes from television. The students you're dealing with have received an awful lot of input from television. To the extent you're trying to teach things in school that have been dealt with on television you're coming up against attitudes the kids already have.

It also seems to me that television is essentially anti-education, anti-intellectual. I do not recall ever having seen in a television series a person with whom people identify positively going to a community college at night for self improvement or to get a better job. There may be exceptions, but I don't think of any offhand.

There is an emphasis on violence, confrontation and combat as a way of resolving personal disputes. That has an impact on the playground in physical injuries, and also in undermining the humanistic approach to solving problems in society.

There is a general cynicism in children very early on as they discover from TV that adults will lie to you for a profit. That's what's taught by commercials. It's very troublesome for children, apparently, particularly around the ages of seven to ten—trying to integrate within their own value structure why is it that mommy and daddy tell you not to lie and yet the people on television lie to you.

And then there's the pervasive emphasis on materialism, contrary to the teachings of humanism, religion and so forth in so many ways.

Third is the impact on teaching techniques. There is a felt need on the part of the teacher to be in competition with the television, to put on a TV show in the classroom to hold the children's attention. There's a short attention span that comes from watching TV. "Sesame Street" teaches the alphabet in commercials—and brought in advertising agencies to help them prepare the program. That's one response. Whether you view it as positive or negative, it is an example of the need to deal with the reality of teaching in a televised world.

Finally, let me just say a word or two about what you can do about all this, because I would like to see the conference develop along the lines of action rather than just talking about what might be nice some day.

Much of what you need to do you do through organizations. But there's much you can do as individuals as well. The Hollywood community—the major producers, directors, writers, and actors— are open to working with you. To point out the desirability of having a major character who is pro-education in some way, pro- self-improvement, or whatever, is something to which they might well respond. Everybody else is out there—the minority groups, the gay rights people, the pro- and antiabortion people, the AMA and the FBI—peddling their own ideology with the producers and writers. You should too.

A second thing you're in a particularly good position to do is to encourage more courses about media evaluation, increasing the sophistication of students. TV is, after all, a part of the larger community in society with which they're going to have to deal.

Third, I'd like to see you work with local media reform groups, folks that are challenging license renewals, that are filing fairness doctrine complaints, equal time complaints, trying to make broadcasters more responsive in your local community. There are legal rights that you have as individuals. Any one of you is in a position to file a license challenge or a fairness complaint, or whatever. Go in and look at the public files that they have to maintain and let you see. Are they complying with their own standards? See how many commercials they're running, how many quality children's programs they are running, how much locally originated public affairs are they producing, how many community-generated public service announcements they are running in prime time as distinguished from three in the morning. All those are things which you can do as individuals, or which you can organize to run as projects for students.

I would like to see more of you active with the NCCB and the NCCL and I will say that. Please write us at: NCCL, 1028 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, D.C., 20036. The National Citizens Communication Lobby has now taken on a major project in which I would very much like your help. The Van Deelin Bill, H.R. 13015 in 1978 (it will have a new number next year), is a broadcaster's delight. It wipes out all the public's rights in broadcasting. No more license renewals. As it is now, a broadcaster is a public trustee. He has an opportunity to broadcast for three years and at the end of that time his opportunity to broadcast ceases. The broadcaster, according to law, is using public property for private gain for a limited period as a public trustee with an obligation to return to the public high-quality programming. You, as a member of the public, can come to the FCC and complain that is not being done.

This bill will eiiminate that.

Broadcasters now have to carry all candidates for public office. Under this bill, all the broadcasters in your state can decide who they want to elect governor and see to it that all the other candidates for that office never get on the news, can't buy time for commercial spots, never get in public affairs programs, they just don't exist.

The fairness doctrine now requires that they must deal with controversal issues of public importance. They cannot be bland, they cannot just play music all day, they cannot just run old movies. They've got to deal with controversial issues of public importance. That's the first requirement of the fairness doctrine. The second requirement is that when they do that, they've got to be relatively balanced in how they do it—not within a program, and it doesn't have to be equal time, and they don't have to give any particular person the right to speak. But sometime during the totality of their programming they have to see to it that a range of viewpoints is heard. The fairness doctrine gets eliminated under this new bill.

As it is now, broadcasters have to report to the FCC on the employment of women and the employment of minorities. That gets wiped out under this bill.

Broadcasters now have to do community ascertainment. They have to interview people in the community about the major needs of the community. That gets wiped out under this bill.

This is offered as a total rewrite of the Communications Act we've been living under since 1927. It happens once every 50 years. It's before the Congress right now, today. Hearings are being held in August and September 1978, and another set of hearings will be held in 1979. The National Citizens Communications Lobby is participating in organizing a Coalition for Public Rights in Broadcasting that now includes some 50 or 60 national groups.

There must be at least a dozen organizations represented among those of you here. If some of you can commit your organizations, or can start working on getting a commitment of your organization to this coalition, I would very much welcome your help.

Without these kinds of legal rights and protections, as minimal as they are, as inadequate as they are, you have nothing.

As I indicated, this is no more than an opener for discussion. A lot of it is admittedly unabashed opinion. I welcome your comments and questions for the next session. Further on we'll get our resource people here and they'll get a chance to take a crack at me, too. Hopefully, I'll have a chance to answer them a bit. So I hope this at least gets us off to a start.

**Minaruth Galey, Resource Person**

I think Nick really has our attention in every way. He's pointed to some of the very grim facts that are not really new to us in education. We've known for some time that the money was not in education, and now we know it is in television and some of the broadcasting industries. It's no secret to us in education that this society is not intellectually oriented. We are not strongly oriented as a society to our cultural events. Given a choice for your students, to either attend a sports event or a ballet, you know where to stand so that you won't be trampled, don't you.

As we face these things, our problem is not to tackle the whole society. I fail to see any way that you and I can take on that whole industry, even standing side by side, shoulder to shoulder. I certainly agree that we as individuals and as part of our various educational organizations should be working to improve television and the broadcasting industry. But speaking as educators, dealing with where we are, what kinds of approaches can we take? We are talking about mass media vs. educational media. What are the differences? The differences in the conditions under which the information is received, the differences in who designs the various messages and what the purposes of the design are; those are certainly issues that I hope various groups of you will be addressing. But first you need a definition. I think Nick's is a very comfortable one, a good ball park one that you can work with and then modify if you need, the idea that it's one-way message, one-way presentation, is that really so different from education? How long have we been bestowing them the word? We are still fighting that image and that problem, in our own field. How do you get the two way? The idea of our teachers becoming facilitators, that's not a new one. NDEA spent millions of dollars trying to change teachers' habits, teachers' ways of teaching. The impact has been judged as less than overwhelming.

With that recognition of some of our problems, we are sort of looking at them with a new eye, new realization; but as you're examining the issue of the impact of mass media on learning, let's distinguish a little bit between education, entertainment, and information. Whose responsibility is it for education? Can we really hang very much of that on the mass media, or is it our job in education to teach our students how to utilize, evaluate, and enjoy the mass media? We talk about our field of communication—we are in educational communications and technology—how do you subsume these various activities, education, instruction, communications. Where do mass media fit into the organization in your system of instruction and education and communication? I think we're all going to have very important thinking to do about it—whether or not we come up with the answer, we should come up with answers that we can take back to our colleagues and share.

As you're distinguishing between education and communication, we need to talk about purpose. What is your real goal with the various audiences? The audience that has gathered freely, and of its

own accord, to watch a football game is a very different audience than that which is going to watch the Boston Symphony, and it might be a good bit different than the fourth graders in your class too. What kind of a role is realistically possible, hopeful, and anticipatable for mass media—not just in education. You're going to have to break it down someway, I think. Are you going to talk about K-12, and then college education? And don't forget continuing education. With our direct involvement in education, for lifelong learning you have a special obligation, I think, to examine what we're going to accomplish with our various audiences with respect to education, instruction, and communication.

I do share Nick's bias and interest in television as opposed to some of the other areas. I think we share that bias because of its omnipotence. It is around us in every place, but its power, how can we use it for us? Now, see that's different when they use it for their purposes. How can we use it for our purposes with the various audiences that we have? We have been devoting more attention now to our handicapped audiences. There's a considerable effort being made now, I think very intelligently, to have handicapped people appearing in the background just naturally as a part of the scene. When a scene takes place in which the main character enters a reception room and needs to go elsewhere to see the boss, the receptionist can easily be in a wheelchair, reflecting, without any point being made about it, signifying acceptance of handicapped people. This was a very effective scene in one of the "Laverne and Shirley" segments. There are some very good things happening, but these seem to be happening in an affective domain and very, very slowly in the mass media. How can we as educators make better use of what is there as well as how can we go about changing it?

As we spoke last night, three or four of the groups were talking about access to the mass media—access for educators into the mass media. Let's talk about a mechanism for that. I think concern there is a very, very important one. How do you and your education systems, our field, get access to the media? You want to go after NBC. You want them to develop your curriculum or mine. How do we do that? If they agree to be cooperative with us, who is going to speak for education? The state department of education? There are 50 of them, and I'll bet that Alaska doesn't agree with Arizona, let alone would Alaska agree with Utah. If it won't be our state department of education, who will speak for education to the media? Will it be some very effective writer, a columnist? How'd he/she get chosen? Would he/she really speak for us? If it won't be our state department, what about some of our districts? If we had complications about agreeing with 50 state departments of education, how are we going to agree with numerous districts in every state? We won't try to even go into the problem of individual schools, that just boggles the mind; but with all the variations within our school responsibilities, our specific requirements, our goals, and our mandates by our various school boards, how are we going to have an access to NBC, CBS, the newspaper chain? That's an excellent question. The answers will be dandies as you try to work with them. Who will you accept as the speaker for education? Will you accept one?

We have something called curriculum. This is a whole area whereby we attempt to establish our specific goals, our objectives, and we do this for various grade levels, for all of our subject matter areas, and we say we will teach this curriculum with these materials. Now, I'm sure that your curricula are excellent. Ours are too in Philadelphia, but how are you and I going to get together about whether it's your curriculum or my curriculum for any one subject area that we're going to try to have implemented, affected, effected, by the various media? Where do we find any kind of unanimity on subject matter, on sequences, grade levels? We are such a multispread in our field called education that our goals are not even the same. Now, true, every educational organization has indicated that the primary purpose of schools is to teach the students to think, to think analytically, to think critically. Many of us don't exactly have a long list of the activities and experiences we give our students for learning to think critically, but we do have that as a goal. Again, everybody's version of how to do that is as different as each of the individual teachers tackling the chore, as each of the curriculum directors who try to support the teachers' efforts, the supervisors in between.

The big problem of education can perhaps be brought down to a smaller size if we take another definition of the role of the teacher. There are several, you know. We have the nice, convenient, and comfortable one of being the authority, one-way presentations, this is the word; but if we consider another aspect of education, not as teaching, but as promoting learning, we can do more with that definition of our role as educators.

What is learning? Well, let's go right past that one, that becomes one that's so complicated. As a teacher I can expect to promote learning, I can set up the environment, and I can provide instructional materials that I have chosen among, I hope, several alternatives; but can I really make sure they learn? Anybody who has spent any time in a public school knows that there isn't a kid who can't outmaneuver you and fail to learn anything that you want him/her to if you do not provide the motivation and the stimulation, whereby he/she sees an importance to it, a relevance to him/her and his/her life. Perhaps it's that relevance to life where mass media can serve us. Can that be a means of motivating our students—our next generation, the secret of our success as a nation, if we are to continue? Education always has such a tremendous responsibility. We have some important questions to come back to. As Nick was pointing out, you have some small group of people who decide what we are going to see, and on what basis. Well, their advantage is of course the money they make. But now if you and I want to shift it so it's to our advantage, we find ourselves in profound difficulty. We can't even agree among ourselves as to what that should be. We have some very good ideas, and I think we could come to some good decisions. Part of the excitement of being here, of this whole adventure, is our coming together to discover what we really think. There is this opportunity—the stimulus, the people in the room—ideal for our finding out what we think. What do we really want from the mass media? Have they ever really accepted any goals in education? Their goal is to make money. Can we change that? Should we change it? Our questions are going to go even beyond our realistic expectations of what education is, because we'll have to consider what it should be, but I'd urge you not to spend too much time on what it should be. This is where we are, this is what is. How can we use this to our best advantage? Do not lose the long view, oh no, let's hold on firmly to the long view. We have it firmly in our mind in education, but let's use it, and move slowly and steadily towards what we hope we can do with it.

We want access to the mass media so that we can influence, just as they are influencing us. We'd like to bring some of the goodness to education. Now, does that mean that we would tend to limit the number of football games? Forget it. We will take on the whole country if we try to limit the Monday night football games in number, in length, or in any other way. Where could we influence? Besides, what's wrong with football games? I'll bet two or three of you here even watch them. If it isn't the football game, maybe it's the baseball. We've always been much more sports fans than symphony orchestra fans. Is that bad? Says who? Our diversity in this country has been our strength. It has provided us with diverse views, different ways of thinking, as we examine what we think ourselves. My concern would be with our diversity of background; and our diversity of educational goals. How can we make all of this pull together as we try to bring about our access to mass media and control to some degree their effect on learning? What kinds of learning chores can you really assign or hope to attain from media, mass or educational? We've had so much difficulty even working out nice, neat prescriptions on how to use the various individual media for educational tasks or assignments. There must be some obvious ways to work toward this. You've got a real set of chores outlined, and I look forward to participating in those with you.

I do want to talk about this matter of bias. We show our bias in saying that we should have a lot more ballet, and considerably more in the way of drama—that is, more than the football games and the basketball games. That's a bias, one I don't think we're going to impose or even try, but I'd like to have you consider bias from two points of view: if a person has an attitude that's different from yours and mine, then, clearly, the person is biased; but if the person is on our side, and thinks as we do, then you see we want the benefit of his/her experience. His/her judgment in this matter—is it biased? Is it the product of experience and wisdom? That's easy to tell. Which side is he/she on—yours or the other person's? If it's your side, then clearly it's judgment, preparation, experience. Without the advantage of Nick's experience, his careful concern and attention to television over a long period of time, would his remarks have been nearly as interesting to us? They would not have had the impact either, an impact that reminds you of the real excitement of considering mass media in any way, in trying to bring them to bear on our problems and tasks in education. I can only see before us a very lively week. Thank you.

**Jon Dunn, Resource Person**

Driving across Iowa, I was really faced with a dilemma. The dilemma was, basically, what was I going to do here. I read all the material that got sent to me and I still had no sense at all about what a resource delegate was supposed to be or do. It wasn't quite as bad as one time a friend of mine called and told me they were having a conference on futures. He described it and I thought it sounded very interesting. The day the conference was to take place, another friend called up and said he was going to the same conference. I said I didn't have a ride, but he drove me over. As the introductions got going, I suddenly realized that I was supposed to be the keynote speaker. It wasn't that bad, because I remember what W.H. Auden said about poets. He said a poet is someone with nothing to do who finds something to do. And I think that's essentially what happened, we found something to do.

Before I address myself to some of the things that Nick said, I'd like to give you a little background so you can get a sense of my point of view and find out what my bias is. When I'm teaching a film class I have the students make a documentary which is supposed to get them to go out and find the truth; then I ask them to make a propaganda film which is supposed to get them to tell lies; and then we talk about the difference between the two. The only really solid definition we ever come up with is that if you agree with it, it's a documentary, and if you don't agree, it's propaganda. That's a good working definition.

About ten years ago, a group of philosophers, media people, and psychologists got together and founded a group called Communications Experience, which was about two things. It was about communications and it was about experience. The very first thing that we discovered really quickly was that in any kind of discourse about experience in English, there was a paucity of vocabulary. We didn't have a very good language to use to talk about our experiential things, so we began using a video machine as a dictionary of ostensive definitions, essentially. Because we could look at an interaction or look at a classroom and say, "I don't know what the words are to apply to that interaction, but there it is." You could run it forwards and backwards, and people could come to agree that yes, that's the quality of interaction that we're talking about. The one piece of hard truth that came out of those ten years of doing that is that what all of us have learned from our education is the form of the education and not the content, which I think gets into all the problems we've been having, difficulties that we're talking about, because we're always looking at the content and not looking at the form. What I mean by form is the way our behavior manifests the content when we put it into our everyday practice. You can talk all you want about democracy, but if the form that we have learned by is autocracy, then the way we behave is autocratic. It also struck me that TV works because education has primed the pump.

We have also learned a way of talking about behavior that has nothing to do with our

behavior. And if there are any groups in here that don't believe that, I've got a set of video exercises and we can borrow a porta pack and spend an hour with some of your small groups and just show you that the very language patterns that we've learned to talk about our learning have absolutely nothing to do with the way we go about it. Where do we learn all that stuff? Well, for me, I wrote in my biography that I went to Japan and learned about America. In fact, that's where I had to go to discover America because here I'm just absolutely surrounded by everything. Ron and I were chosen to be two of five media specialists to go on an educational exchange program. There were 20 people all told in that group with all kinds of credentials, the educational elite of our country. We had Ph.D.'s, we had school superintendents, I mean we had people who by all our criteria would be considered successful, intelligent, and well-educated. Within three days, they became the worst, grossest bunch of animals I have ever dealt with. They were impossible, and I think Ron can probably substantiate this. They were off the wall, they were ugly, they were mean to one another, they were mean to their Japanese hosts, they were hostile. They hated sleeping on the floor, they hated squatting over a place to go to the bathroom, they hated everything. And I was videotaping like crazy, I just loved it.

It turned out, for almost every one of them, it was an inability to adjust to some very small thing. They couldn't adjust to the fact that the bathrooms weren't designed the same way as American bathrooms. They couldn't adjust to being in a different cultural milieu where there is a different value system. It came to me as a kind of big shock because I, naively, like Minaruth, believe that we're all for good motives and pure of heart, and we're teaching people to make them well-educated and one of the things a well-educated person ought to be able to do is adjust to different situations. That's what we're supposed to be doing in our education, to take whatever is coming at us and do something with it. And if you can't do something with a pair of chopsticks without turning hostile, something is wrong in the system.

I had another experience there that I'd like to get to. Both Ron and I were incredibly moved in Hiroshima. There was another fellow on that trip named Dick Lacey, and the two of us admitted that in our teaching careers we had both taught John Hershey's book. We went and found a copy of it, bought it, and read it again. We discovered that the first time we had read it and taught it, we had not understood a word of it. There was nothing in our experience that had made it at all meaningful, and we had had the arrogance to go teach other people what it meant.

That developed a little game I have hence played with teachers and in teacher training. The game is to have a little objective discussion about Hiroshima. I ask the teachers to tell me everything they know about Hiroshima, and they know everything there is to know about it. I mean they can tell you the body counts, they can tell you about radiation sickness, and they can tell you what the heat is at the center of explosion. Then I apologize, I say I feel really bad, and I say that I brought a film to teach them something about it but they already know it all; but, then, I haven't got anything to do for the next 20 minutes, so I run the film. When the lights are turned on, I'm looking at a very ashen group of people. They are thoroughly wiped out, and I play hard ass. I say: "What the hell is wrong with all you people? You just told me all that stuff. Nobody was looking this way when we were talking about it, what's the problem? I mean you told me about women's hair coming out in handfulls, you told me about people's eyeballs being burned out of the sockets when they looked at the thing, what is the difference?" Well, they say, it's different. I say, well, how do you think you would have felt if you were there? Okay, they all realized that in learning the actual experience is prime. That's how we find out about something. That's how we know it. To experience something vicariously, like looking at a scrreen or through television, seems to be a little better, but reading about it is probably the lowest on the scale. And yet most of our education is set up just the opposite. The kid's basic experience is given the lowest credence. What the hell are they, they're just little kids, and we should read the masters and find out what it is.

The other thing that came out of Japan was that I started writing some axioms about some true ways of living in the world, and Nick kind of brought it up, and Mina said something about the grim facts that Nick brought out. Well, the problem was we were laughing at those grim facts, which told me that they weren't grim, they were serious (axiom one is: if it's serious, it must be funny). To be serious about stuff, you take it in complete, fully, you understand the whole thing and therefore you understand the humor of it. The fact is most Americans have learned to be grim and not serious. So, they're not grim facts,

they're very serious facts. One of the first things that got me onto this thing of us learning form was to have read somewhere, I guess it was in the *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, that the majority of SS officers were Roman Catholic Austrians. It absolutely blew me away because after having 16 years of parochial education, I knew absolutely nothing in the content of Catholicism that allows you to put people into the ovens. But I also realized that it was everything in the form that allows it. It was authoritarian, there was a strict hierarchy, and blind faith was the last rule, okay? So it was very easy for Hitler to nudge Jesus Christ a few steps to the right or left (I don't know which way he would have moved) and take over. I think it is true in our society that the content is democracy, but our whole process has been autocratic. What we have learned are not democratic processes, you know—God forbid that we should actually let kids make decisions. But in fact we go through an autocratic process that allows us to go through a national scare, for me it is a national scare, that we came very close to becoming the second great fascist country. And I think we're completely prepared for it.

Nick said earlier that one of the things that TV does not do is turn people into themselves. And I think that's also because education has prepared us for that. I think we have what I call our economic theory of education which is that we go to a course and the first question we ask is not what is in this for me, but what do they want. You sit there and you psych out the professor for your first three days, wondering what he wants and how you can give it to him with the least effort. So, it's perfectly economic, I want the highest return for the least input. And we have all learned that because that's the form of it.

We were kind of blown away in Japan to find that there was so much cooperation among people and our system fosters competitiveness. I think it makes us not only competitive, but also very selfish, very egocentric, but without any of the skills to really develop the self. It's a nice paradox. We're taught not to cooperate.

The other nice word that came up is motivation. When I first went to Kentucky, I was invited to speak and do a workshop for the Kentucky Art Educators Association, and the keynote speaker was talking about motivation. That was the keynote address, and I was really keyed to listen to that. Only he spent the whole time speaking about motivation as what we do to them to make them do what we want them to do. That whole sense that motiviation comes from within somebody never occurred to this fellow, but that motivation is gimmicks, tricks that we can play to make them do what we want. All the workshop leaders were given a long stemmed rose to thank us, that was our pay, and I got much more interested in the rose halfway through the speech than in his talk, and finally he just stopped talking. He called my attention, and he said, "Jon, what's the concern with the rose." At that very flash of a second that Auden thing came true. When the moment comes you know what to do. I told hims that the rose and his talk reminded me of what Dorothy Parker had said. When Alexander Woollcott challenged the intelligence of women, he said women can't even use words in sentences. He then challenged her to use the word horticulture in a sentence and she said: well, you can lead a horticulture, but you can't make her think. And I think that's true.

One thought that occurred to me is the reason big business took over TV and not education, although I think they have, is largely because they realize that education wasn't as effective as TV. Now that's a horrible thought. Maybe Nick is being much more neutral than I am about it, I really worry about big business. I wrote a letter to my local Bell telephone company that what Bell Telephone could do for Chile, they could certainly do for Kentucky. One of the really shocking little newspaper items that I saw, exactly one year to the day that we left Vietnam, was the announcement of the settlement of oil leases between American big business and Hanoi, and I suddenly realized what the whole war was about. It was about drilling rights, and why couldn't they have started negotiating ten years ahead of time, except they figured a war was a cheaper way of getting it, I guess.

I also disagree with Nick that technology is value-free. I think the medium is the message and that his statement assumes that the content is what we're watching, that the content need not be value laden; but the very process that we're in is value laden. And I also don't think courses about TV in the old form of courses are going to change anything. As educators I think our major concern is not so much with mass media or how we can subvert mass media to suit our ends, because we can't. Our major concern should be looking very carefully at what it is we do, because it is what it is we do and how we do it that is being transmitted. The content of it doesn't matter.

I had a friend when I was at Temple who was doing his Ph.D. work in physics, and he turned to me with a shock, as he was working on his dissertation, and said that everything he learned in high school is false. That the entire body of science has changed so radically in 12 years that all of the assumptions that had been made just didn't hold any more. So the data change, and if all we're doing is teaching data, well, that's why I said TV makes that obsolete, the very process makes that obsolete. The stuff is changing too fast. Another thing to understand is that it is all an invention. That everything we deal with, we made as human beings. Physics is an invention. It doesn't have to have any more real existence in the world than whatever.

I remember the biggest fight I ever got into was a debate about ten years ago, at a national conference where 100 people were invited to talk about the future of film in America, and Ron can remember that argument too, because it turned into a fist fight. The argument was put forth that film ought to be the subject of study, rather than media, because it had a longer history. And I suggested that maybe we should study alchemy then, because it had a much longer history. At that point the speaker came over the stand.

As I said, coming across all that corn yesterday on a motorcycle, I think I finally arrived at understanding what one charge of this conference could be, and it would be to concentrate ourselves, not so much on the gathering of tactics on a small scale, but really look at the bigger things, and how that whole thing synthesizes, and is put together, and how we in this position of educators who are dealing with the technology can be effective and affective. If there's any charge, it might be just to deal with bigger issues than purely logistical or tactical ones.

## POWER AND CONTROL OF THE MASS MEDIA

### A Statement from Nicholas Johnson to the Okoboji Conference 1978

The perception and willingness of those associated with this conference to undertake a study of the impact of the mass media upon learning is heartening. The opportunity to participate in the conference this year has been an honor and a rewarding experience for me. My appreciation goes out to all of you.

Those of you who are media educators have a special responsibility and opportunity when it comes to the mass media. You are in the best position to interpret their awesome power to the education community, and, in turn, to carry the concerns of educators to those corporate and governmental officials who are in a position to do something about it.

Your effectiveness will be significantly affected, in my judgment, by the extent to which you are able to confront candidly the power and control exercised by those who operate the mass media in America—especially television.

As you who are leaders know so well, those who control any community or society are those who control its systems of communications. This is true at the family dinner table or in the classroom. It is true in a democratic society or a totalitarian dictatorship. When the military take over a country the first thing they seize are the radio stations.

Large bureaucracies and institutions of many kinds share varieties of power in the U.S. That is one of our nation's great strengths. But a disproportionate share of power—in my opinion—is held by large corporations, increasingly transnational conglomerate corporations. That power is exercised, and evidenced, in many ways. But one of the most effective and pervasive is the corporate control of television (and other major media).

The greatest power in broadcasting, by any measure, is held by the three networks. They are, each of them, large conglomerates in their own right. Even more significant, those who pay for the programs are themselves among the largest corporations in the country. There are legions of government reports, academic reports, and books documenting the ways in which this power has been amassed and abused.

One of the latest is by the respected academic historian Erik Barnouw, called *Sponsor.* In this book Professor Barnouw documents the way in which corporate power in this country controls not only the commercials on commercial television, but the program content. The largest advertisers control the content of the public service announcements as well—and, increasingly, the content of public broadcasting (orginally set up to be a "non-commercial" broadcasting service).

I don't mean to dwell upon these truths, or overemphasize them, but I mention them again in this way out of a concern that seemed to me, during my time at the conference, to be receiving less attention than I think is essential if the overall problem is to be understood and treated.

Of special concern is the matter of the currently pending H.R. 13015, which will totally undo the current system of broadcast regulation in this country. It is inconceivable to me that any media educator (not affiliated or identified with the commercial broadcasting industry) who is truly and fully informed about this bill would not come away totally outraged by it.

But I do not urge you take my word in opposing the legislation.

What I do urge is that you inform yourself about it and then do all within your power to have your views considered by the House of Representatives at this time.

Please write. We'll be pleased to send you what we have and tell you where you can get the other side as well:

National Citizens Communications Lobby
1028 Connecticut Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20036

# Characteristics of Mass Media Literacy

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## INTRODUCTION

Communication consists of development of skills, abilities, and proficiencies in the domains of perception, cognition, intelligence, and reactions. Motor and affective components are involved also. Effective communications may consist of the assimilation, organization, and use of information or knowledge. Thus defined, communication is of many kinds. Each serves some function and may be oriented to personal goals and achievement expectations. The attribute of media literacy contributes to the use of media for communication. The design, arrangement, and utilization of media literacy significantly increase the probability that changes in behavior will occur progressively from an initial reaction level toward a desired terminal performance.

Mass media can be expected to control and regulate important variables or conditions of effective communication. There are, however, many determinants to effective communication, such as characteristics of individuals, their abilities, personalities, levels of previous knowledge or skills, and other factors which cannot be controlled. Therefore, they must be accepted as they exist. It is important for the learner and designer to understand those factors which regulate effective information transmission.

The discipline of mass communication has contributed to effective information transmission in several ways. For one thing, almost all of the major forms of communication media found wide application in entertainment and broadcasting before they became common in education. In the realm of theory and research, there are two streams of activity that are relevant to the development and use of educational materials. One is basically sociological in nature, the other more mathematical.

The mathematical approach is generally referred to as information theory. In this theory, communication is viewed in terms of the physical aspects of carrying a message from a sender to a receiver. The central concepts are channel capacity, redundancy, and noise. Channel capacity is the highest rate at which a communication channel can transmit information. Redundancy is a characteristic of messages referring to the repetition of stimulus materials with a resultant increase in the number of opportunities for learning. Noise is the term given to all competing stimuli which interfere with the transmission of a message. Noise usually does not originate with the sender and includes such things as sound, physical discomfort, viewer anxiety, or anything else that might detract from the message.

Information theory has not had much effect on educational practice or on the production of media materials. If, however, as some psychologists maintain, the human being performs as a single-channel receiver, the concepts of channel capacity and redundancy are indeed relevant to the ability of viewers to learn from media presentation. Many available films and materials appear to move at too fast a rate for

comprehension and might be more effective if the concepts of channel capacity and redundancy had been considered in their design.

The sociological stream of research and theory examines the factors that help or hinder the media in performing several communication functions. The most important of these functions are: forming, providing an individual learner with information he/she did not have before; socializing, imparting attitudes or cultural traits; and mobilizing, causing a viewer to take some action he/she had not planned on before. The mass communications specialist studies the effects of radio, television, film, newspapers, magazines, and the like on society and individuals in relation to these three functions.

The objective, therefore, of effective message design is to arrange, produce, and present stimulus fields, cue systems, and complex sequential patterns of those which convey information, arouse meaningful responses, restructure conflicts and attitudes, and regulate or control behavior so that desired kinds of communication will occur.

**Communication Model for Mass Media Literacy**

An adaptation of several communication models, developed from Hoban, Berlo, Schramn, and others is seen below in figure one. It is simple and versatile, yet it subsumes an enormous background of behavorial science theory and research. S-M-C-R stands for the four key components—source, message, channel, and receiver.

**Principles of Learning**

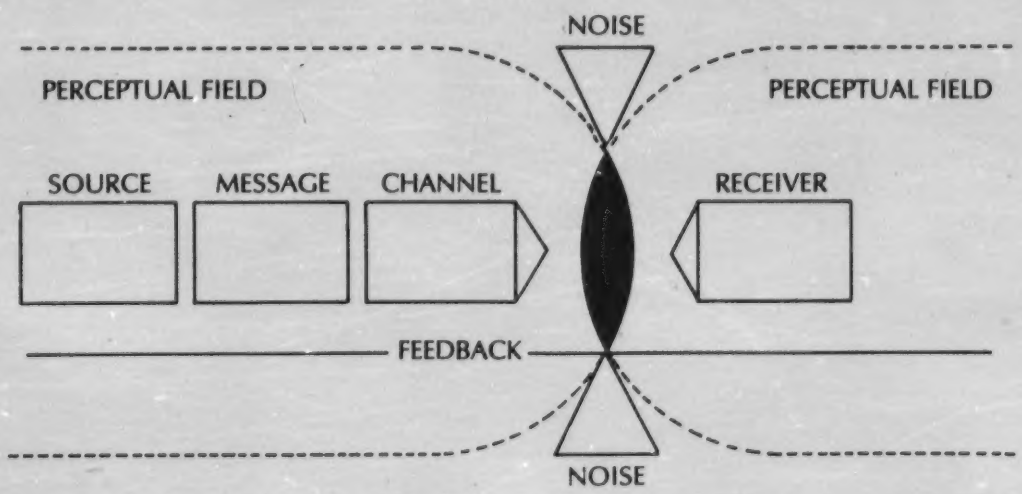
Following is a list of several general areas which when considered together or in part constitute those congruent conditions necessary for inclusion in the development and distribution of effective and efficient mass media transmissions.

1. *Preparatory Conditions for Communication* / Audience attitudes, interests, background experiences, expectations, performance criteria, etc.

2. *Selecting and Ordering Content for Communication* / Levels of abstraction, hierarchies of learning, etc. Message organization should function to optimize learning.

3. *Characteristics of Stimulus Materials* / Realism, stimulus intensities, cue systems, patterns, fields, etc.

**FIGURE ONE: S-M-C-R MODEL**



4. *Perceptual and Conceptual Clarity* / Structure and complexity of stimulus fields, attending behaviors, scanning behaviors, etc.

5. *Selective Perception* / Complexity and ambiguity of stimulus materials, qualities of completeness or closure, etc.

6. *Rate of Communication Development* / Pacing, message evaluation, and content density.

7. *Learner Responses* / Overt and covert.

8. *Repetition/Redundancy* / Design variations, varied repetitions, etc.

As defined, therefore, mass media literacy is the ability of an individual to recognize the impact of the content and the form of the communication media and to respond with feeling, individuality, and constructive concern to basic problems and issues in life. This ability also allows the individual to design messages for distribution by the mass media. This definition is to be interpreted within the context of the following assumptions:

1. The mass media provide the learner with vicarious experiences.

2. These experiences have been given a form so that they can be communicated.

3. They are to be communicated to a large number of people.

4. The sender has a message which is intended to be the same for every individual member of the audience.

5. The essential differences between mass media and non-mass media may not reside so much in the skills required to decode the message, but rather in the content (form) of the message and the actions that it brings about.

## MASS MEDIA LITERACY: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research and theory in the area of learning from media, whether mass media or not, has focused primarily on the design, reception, and interpretation of messages. In order to communicate effectively, the message designer must be aware of mass media literacy competencies that the learner needs to possess in each of the five phases of message reception and interpretation. These five phases involve: receiving the message, paying attention to it, understanding the symbol system in which it is encoded, putting the parts of the message together, and acting on the information it contains. It should be noted that these competencies allow the mass media literate learner to use the media effectively and creatively as well as to interpret messages that the message designer has created. Each of these five phases is now examined from the points of view of the message designer and the message consumer.

Incidentally, it is important to recognize that program developers in the production of mass media transmissions have found consideration of the following design characteristics essential in altering audience (recipient) behavior patterns to achieve specified behavioral outcomes.

1. *Motivation and Incentives* / Positive suggestion, simplicity of the message to be conveyed, realistic and/or practical applications, immediacy of early use (of the information/ product), etc.

2. *Self Activity* / Raising and answering questions to instigate arousal and subsequent closure; expression of pleasure (anticipation of what might be a minimum delay for participation, i.e., instant satisfaction—a drink of Gatorade will provide instantaneous refreshment).

3. *Belongingness* / The learner tends to put things together (associates items of experience which are thought to belong together). Use simple words familiar to the audience. Give reasons why things should be done in a certain way. Establish relations of new material to the recipient's past experience, i.e., radial tires are safer than conventional tires and will provide 257 percent more wear.

In an attempt to further clarify important issues in the design of effective communication transmissions, the five previously cited phases will now be examined from the point of view of the message designer and the message consumer. These are message reception, attending behavior, understanding the symbol system, message synthesis and evaluation, and acting on the information.

### Message Reception

The learner must be capable of receiving the message. Abilities related to this phase are not competencies in the usual sense of the word. They require no more than their normal functioning of the five senses. To receive a message, the learner has to be able to see, hear, touch, taste, or smell it. Developmentally, these abilities are established quite early and consequently there is no real need to teach them in the traditional sense. However, it should not be forgotten that learners with sensory handicaps need to be compensated for their deficiencies.

**Attention to the Message**

Experience has told us on many occasions that attention is drawn by stimuli that stand out from their environment. We are startled by a sudden sound, or instinctively look toward movement. Stimuli of this kind in the mass media affect us in the same way. Loud music and rapid movement inevitably draw our attention to the TV commercial. Yet, again, these are autonomic responses rather than learned competencies and we have no real control over them.

There are, though, certain learned responses that direct attention to stimuli. The message designers use them to their advantage. We learn early that big things tend to be important as do things placed in the middle of a picture. We learn that important messages are preceded by literal or metaphorical "fanfare."

Specifically, in the presentation of messages (content) it has been found that audience attention and/or impressionability is most frequently enhanced by:

1. Vividness or intensity with which the material (content, message, etc.) is presented. (Use of color, tone of voice, size, novelty, contrasting background, etc.)
2. Duration of presentation of material, there being optimal time for various forms of material (dramatic vs. factual, static vs. moving objects, i.e., car commercials).
3. Intensity, regularity, meaningfulness, etc. of the stimuli.
4. Sensory avenue of presentation depending upon various conditions such as: habitual method of the learner, age of the learner, nature and meaningfulness of the material, and learner's mode of apprehension (translation, and other individual differences in ability to use different sensory cues).
5. Use of both visual and auditory content materials is usually better than the poorer of the two used separately.
6. Use of kinesthetic stimulation in the form of articulation added to visual presentation, to auditory stimulation, or to the two combined.
7. Varied repetition in presentation.
8. Judicious use of humor.
9. Emotional tone of the presentation.

**Understanding the Symbol System**

The learner/consumer must be able to understand the meaning of the separate components of the message. Since the information conveyed by the mass media has to do with vicarious experiences, the way in which the information is presented is largely conventional. The learner must therefore be able to understand the symbol system that is used. The importance of certain areas stands out:

1. *Functional Patterns* / Interrelationship of parts (see how easily the blade can be installed and removed from the razor), etc.
2. *Spatial Patterns* / In addition to the car, see all the extra space you have in this car (a tall basketball player getting out of a small car) etc.
3. *Temporal Patterns* / Playing a specific melody when a particular message (product) is being advertised—eventually hearing the melody will bring to mind the primary message.
4. *Logical Patterns* / The installation of smoke detectors in every room of a house is a necessary precaution against the threat of fire.
5. *Perceptual Cues* / Color cueing (arterial blood flow is shown in red, venous blood flow in blue).
6. *Conventional Signs* / Arrows, the deaths head, etc., and, of course, words.

The developmental stage is an extremely important influence on the acquisition of competencies related to these areas. Even most mature adults still lack some of these competencies.

**Message Synthesis and Evaluation**

Once the elements of a message have been decoded and the concepts contained in them understood, the learner needs to structure these concepts in ways that are the most meaningful and with which he/she is most comfortable. This involves establishing, through association and other cognitive mechanisms, conceptual patterns that correspond to the organization of the phenomena the mass media are communicating. An example of this would be learning from a program on ecological systems not just on the individual members of a biological food chain, but how they relate to each other to make the chain work.

Concepts received in the message also need to be related to concepts the learner has already learned and which form preexisting conceptual patterns. This, too, calls upon cognitive mechanisms that organize information. A message must be fit into the appropriate set of existing ideas, filed in the right drawers, as it were. Usually, room has to be made in the file cabinet for new information. Existing conceptual patterns have to be altered to accommodate a

new concept.

The decision as to what should be done with information once it has been interpreted often involves judgments that call upon competencies lying outside specific cognitive process. Such competencies enable the learner to create an affective, political, social, religious, or economic context within which the message is to be interpreted. There is a large body of research and theory in the social sciences that relates to this. Rather than repeat this here, let it just be said that the mass media have certainly affected our social, political, and economic systems. On the other hand, our social, political, and economic value systems affect both our interpretation of mass media messages and the biases that message designers let creep into their products.

It should not be forgotten that the mass media are evolving and that the mass media literate person needs to keep up with these changes. As in all things, the past helps us understand the present. The impact of radio on society at its introduction was different from the impact of television, since the radio required more audience involvement. At the present time, CB radio and the potential use of the telephone to extend computer technology into the home hold the promise, for the first time in history, of two- way mass communication. The demise of mass-appeal magazines in favor of class magazines points to a form of catering to individual differences among members of society.

Finally, a mass media literate person must know when his/her saturation point has been reached. The media must be turned off to allow time for reflection and for the internalization of the information communicated.

### Action

Appropriate action should follow the reception of information from the mass media. This is, once again, largely determined by the social, political, and economic context within which the message is received. Similar competencies apply here as in Message Synthesis and Evaluation above.

## TOWARD COMPETENCY IDENTIFICATION

Most important among the competencies that a literate person possesses are those which enable the person to act in a way that is appropriate to the information received and to use the mass media as a means to communicate. This section, therefore, presents lists of competencies which describe such action from the perspective of both consumer and creator of mass media messages. In addition, a set of ethical considerations which apply to the creative process is proposed. Competencies related to specific cognitive aspects or technical skills of decoding and encoding are not addressed here in detail.

The mass media literate person is able to:
—understand the commercial and free enterprise structure of mass media.
—understand the influence of mass media upon self, individuals, community, and society.
—understand one's needs and relate mass media presentations to effective individual and group problem-solving.
—appreciate, discriminate, and develop values from mass media.
—identify propaganda techniques used in the mass media.
—identify the viewpoint and/or bias of the producers of media.
—determine and appreciate the degree of expertise behind a mass media presentation.
—recognize that lifestyles, values, and economic conditions depicted by the mass media are not necessarily typical, attainable, or desirable for all people.
—recognize the degree of objectivity with which controversial issues are presented.
—recognize and exercise opportunities to evaluate and criticize mass media for positive improvement.
—recognize the motivations behind the message of mass media— whether it be didactic and/or informational, commercial, or entertaining.
—recognize the characteristic of varied mass media forms and their implications for the receiver of messages.
—understand the "grammar" and symbol systems of the message.
—recognize the manipulation by mass media and make a conscious choice whether or not to be manipulated.

In addition to being a literate consumer of mass media, a learner needs to know, among other things, how a message is designed, and be aware of the kind of effort and skill that is involved in message design. Learning to communicate through mass media channels is part of the literacy objective.

The person who is literate in regards to mass media will be able to:
—recognize the varied forms of mass media inclucing the characteristic strengths and limitations of each in the creation of messages.
—identify a specific content objective(s).

—select the medium most appropriate to achieve a content objective for an identified audience.
—understand the economics associated with each mass media form (both local and national scope).
—recognize the technical necessities (hardware and personnel) to create and distribute a specific message.
—determine the form(s) and treatment(s) appropriate to the medium, message, and audience identified.
—define and characterize the intended audience.
—identify and locate the sources of assistance in preparing and distributing messages in mass media forms.

Ethical considerations should influence all areas of human interaction. Persons engaged in creating messages for mass media need to be aware that they should meet the standards which relate to these ethical considerations. In the interest of applying ethical principles to the creative process, the mass media literate person should:
—adhere to generally accepted standards of accuracy, truth, and fairness in dealing with clients, colleagues, and the public.
—respect any privileged information.
—avoid practices which would tend to diminish the credibility of the media.
—maintain a continuous effort to develop one's powers of observation, reasoning, and communication.
—honor freedom of expression as a basic right of the human race.
—balance the public interest with private interests.
—make a clear distinction between expressions of fact, expressions of opinion, commentary and analysis, and expressions of the imagination.
—encourage the public to make their criticisms and positive suggestions known.
—respect the dignity, privacy, rights, and feelings of individuals and groups.
—assume ultimate responsibility and accountability for content.
—promote excellence in content.
—provide information about content that would assist parents, educators, and others responsible for working with children to meet their special obligations for guidance in the evaluation, selection, and utilization of mass media.
—assist cultural, educational, religious, and other community organizations in presenting their messages to the public.
—provide for research and experimentation in order to encourage continuous growth and improvement.
—make every effort to become knowledgeable and be guided by the needs and characteristics of the audience served.
—provide balance in the presentation of controversial issues.
—identify clearly the messages of sponsors and advertisers.

## CONCLUSION

The competencies identified above as necessary for a person to be mass media literate are largely self-explanatory. They do, however, require further refinement before they can be applied with maximum effect either to the creation of mass media messages for consumption by various consumers or to the development of a curriculum for mass media literacy. Particularly important in this regard is the need for further research in the cognitive aspects of mass media literacy. This would lead to the identification of specific competencies which, once identified in an individual, might lead to successful instruction adapted to that individual.

The continuing interaction between the mass media and our society, politics, and economic system also deserves further consideration. This is particularly important in view of constant changes in mass media technology, some of which were mentioned above. Political and commercial interests have always been quick to exploit mass media while educators have often lacked the resources and the resourcefulness to do likewise. Beyond keeping on top of these things, educators should identify the new competencies that are needed to enable the objective appraisal of information communicated in these novel ways.

Above all, educators need to develop curricula to teach mass media literacy at all age levels. All people need to know how to handle the information presented by the mass media and to cope with a society that is being influenced more and more by the media. This also implies a need for people to use the mass media creatively to express what they need to communicate. For educators to ignore these would be a serious omission.

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# Integrating Mass Media Literacy into the Curriculum

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## GROUP STATEMENT

Few would discount the influence of mass media on the lives of people all over the world, a fact that educators need to take seriously. However, indiscriminate use of mass media in education will only reinforce Silberman's observation that incompetence or indifference is not so much the problem as "mindlessness." He concluded: " . . .the solution must lie in infusing the schools . . .with humane purpose—more important, with thought about purpose, and about the ways in which techniques, content, and organization fulfill or alter purpose." (Silberman, 1974, p. 310)

This should, perhaps, be the major concern of the educator in using the mass media. Their impact on education both in the formal and informal sense is a facet that has not yet been well researched. However, since education's major thrust is communcation, it is reasonable to assume that communcation theory and research can be used by educators in making the learner a more effective consumer of the mass media.

Silberman, in recognizing the two-way process in communication, has placed the relationship of mass media and education in perspective:

> We must find ways of stimulating educators—as well as radio, television, and film directors and producers; and newspaper, magazine, and TV journalists and executives—to think about what they are doing and why they are doing it. (Silberman, 1974, p. 31)

This was the major guideline used in the preparation of this paper. The scope, however, has been limited to formal education, particularly as it pertains to elementary and secondary learners, and to the preparation of those who work with them in the teaching/learning process. This in no way reduces its importance during the pre- or post-school years in informal learning.

It should be understood that the recommendations for curricula presented here have been made with the assumption that we must work within the status quo. This, at best, reflects a limited application of the mass media to education. Any implementation should, of necessity, include a systematic approach to curriculum development. Some aspects of such an approach, from needs assessment through evaluation, have been formally presented here and are further discussed in the summary statement.

## ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

### Preface

> Educators are challenged more seriously than ever before to teach young people to evaluate media more critically and to grow in taste and discrimination as they use media in school and at home. (Srygly, 1978, p. 528)

Over the period of a lifetime, people learn more via electronic and print mass media than through formal instruction. Therefore, it is urgent that young people be equipped with the skills to interpret and utilize information received

through the media. Furthermore, this ability is essential if they are to cope effectively with the present and survive in the increasingly complex, technological world of the future.

Discriminating selection of program material for television viewing is also important, particularly at the preschool age when children's minds are being developed. Until now, educational systems have not usually included these skills as part of the typical school curriculum, and perhaps this fact is to some extent responsible for many current problems in learning. Authorities suggest that children "tune out" in the classroom because they regard school as an interruption to "real" learning from the mass media. Some proponents call for a return to the basics, but in present day society, what could be more basic for survival in a complex environment than the development and extension of mass media skills?

### Goals and activities based on skills

This curriculum relates to television, radio, and newspapers at the kindergarten through eighth-grade level. It is suggested as a broad, generalized guide to assist students in understanding their existence in a contemporary, technological society. Goals are intended to provide a framework for developing more in-depth units of study. Goals may be introduced in different grade levels and extended and developed in other grades once they have been introduced. We will recommend a grade level of introduction in parentheses after each goal. Activities may relate to more than one goal.

#### THE STUDY OF BROADCAST TELEVISION

**Goals**

1. Become aware that learning from TV is a constant process. (K)
2. Recognize that TV influences his/her life. (K)
3. Gain knowledge of the nature of the TV industry and technical production processes. (4)
4. Become aware that it is important to be selective in viewing. (K)
5. Recall and comprehend programs viewed. (K)
6. Differentiate between program and commercials. (K)
7. Identify types of programs. (3)
8. Recognize differences in treatment of topics (fact and fiction, bias, propaganda, stereotypes). (K)
9. Be able to critically evaluate programs viewed. (K)
10. Develop an awareness of the public's right to input for cable and commercial TV. (7)

**Suggested Activities**

1. Construct a bulletin board of information about specific subjects viewed on TV such as animals, countries, people, etc.
2. Research the influence of TV on speech, dress, eating habits, recreation, and family life. Prepare a notebook.
3. Make a list of misconceptions presented by TV and compare with a list of misconceptions corrected by TV.
4. Write to a TV station to inquire which programs are broadcast live. Compare this list with a list of programs that are videotaped for viewing at another time.
5. Read a weekly TV listing of programs and record titles of programs which are documentaries or drama.
6. Poll students' favorite TV shows. Make a chart recording results. Discuss reasons for popularity.
7. Role play a particular TV character. Have students guess who it is. Discuss how much is revealed about the character through the show.
8. View a segment of a TV program without sound and discuss the tone of sound in TV. Reverse the procedure by covering the screen and listening to a segment without the picture.
9. Record slogans or jingles to identify TV commercials. Discuss why particular commercials are remembered.
10. Research, and report via transparency an outline on the history of advertising. Discuss influence of TV advertising on recent purchases.
11. Watch TV news for a period of time and keep diaries. Discuss how bias can slant public opinion.
12. Organize a field trip to a local TV station (or introduce via mediated materials).
13. Create, with students, a classification chart of persuasion techniques used in advertising. Students will complete the chart with examples from current TV viewing.
14. Write opinion letters to television station manager criticizing or praising programs viewed.
15. Produce a videotape program on ways different families utilize television in the home. Have students role play these parts.
16. Make an oral report on programs selected from recommended titles posted weekly by teacher.
17. Identify favorite class program through survey technique. Watch program regularly and discuss episodes at periodic intervals.
18. Find a TV commercial that teaches false values. Create a new version, dramatize it, and videotape it.
19. Identify various careers in the TV industry. After interviewing personnel at the local TV station, describe duties and education needed to qualify.
20. Arrange to appear on a local TV program stating students' views on a controversial issue.
21. Report to class on TV commercials that present "instant solutions" to problems. Define problems and solutions presented. Determine how realistic the solutions are and what would be necessary to remedy the cause of the problem.
22. View a prime-time adventure show to identify the central plot. Complete a chart under the headings: program, leading character, major problem, solutions, traits of main character.

## THE STUDY OF THE NEWSPAPER

### Goals

1. Understand the structure and organization of a newspaper. (3)
2. Learn newspaper vocabulary and terminology. (1)
3. Understand the process of publishing a newspaper. (5)
4. Understand the presentation of the news. (3)
5. Appreciate the newspaper as a tool for information. (2)
6. Appreciate the newspaper as a source of entertainment. (3)
7. Understand the role of advertising in the newspaper. (4)
8. Acquire the habit of reading the news in a discriminating manner. (6)
9. Recognize the role of the free press in a democratic society to serve all factions. (7)

### Suggested Activities

1. On a bulletin board, label the parts of a front page. (headlines, bylines, cuts, etc.)
2. Create front page layout from articles cut out of three different newspapers and assemble according to established criteria.
3. Using a ruler, measure the length of columns of news and advertising for one week in one newspaper. Compare amounts by drawing a chart.
4. Discuss the parts of a newspaper as they relate to individual interests of students and adults.
5. Make a list of new words and their meanings as an ongoing activity. Present to class on a transparency.
6. Visit a newspaper plant.
7. Establish a chart of descriptions and classifications of newspaper jobs.
8. Invite an editor to speak on how an issue is published.
9. Interview parents on how family newspaper(s) is(are) selected.
10. Collect weather maps for one week. Make a bulletin board.
11. Analyze jobs advertised in the "Help Wanted" ads which are in a special field (e.g. computer technology). Compare the number of jobs in a daily newspaper and Sunday edition. Discuss why the numbers differ.
12. Clip full week of continuous comic strip. Discuss dialogue of characters—real or unreal? Are there stereotypes? Is the plot sensible?
13. Rewrite the script of persons speaking in a comic strip.
14. Construct the imaginary plot sequence for subsequent strips in a serial comic strip.
15. Compare the cost of advertising charges: daily paper with Sunday. Which costs more? Compute percentage of difference.
16. Make a grocery list by comparative shopping through the grocery advertisements.
17. Collect and post advertisements which have little relation to the actual product. Write an advertisement so that it represents the product correctly.
18. Write a rationale of why advertising is necessary.
19. Draw a time line of United States history relating to the availability of newspapers.
20. Write a story imagining United States events from another country's point of view.
21. Rewrite headlines to eliminate bias (or to show bias).
22. Collect and display types of newspapers (*Wall Street Journal, Christian Science Monitor, National Inquirer*, etc.).
23. Compare news by analyzing it. This might be from two different newspapers from the same town, or one from another country.
24. Videotape how a reporter interviews a person to get news for a news article.
25. List descriptive words from ads.

## THE STUDY OF RADIO

### Goals

1. Understand the utilization of radio: past, present, and future. (4)
2. Learn about the types of local radio stations. (K)
3. Understand the process of broadcasting, including personnel. (5)
4. Evaluate the advertising effectiveness of radio. (6)
5. Recognize types of program content. (3)

### Suggested Activities

1. Write or tell what impact radio has on the listener. Does the student really listen or is it a noise environment?
2. Write a script contrasting the differences in the uses of radio in World War I and World War II.
3. Examine current radio program schedules. Explain why the offerings differ in scope and content.
4. Prepare a chart to illustrate the advantages of radio and the disadvantages of radio.
5. Take a poll of students' preference of a radio station. Take a poll of parents' preference of a radio station. Have a debate presenting both views.
6. List the types of radio stations in the local area. What is the target audience of each? Which has the largest audience?
7. Record a typical program segment of three radio stations. Make a game of who can name the call letters of each in the shortest period of time.
8. Prepare a bulletin board graphically illustrating the many uses of radio—emergencies, CB, police, fire, for education in underdeveloped nations, etc.
9. Write a letter to a radio program to inquire how the recordings are selected for airing.
10. Interview a disc jockey emphasizing educational background and job description.
11. Make a diagram for display of the many jobs in a radio station.
12. Read about and organize a presentation to explain to the class AM and FM transmission. Transparencies may accompany the explanation.
13. Using a stop watch, log the amount of time used for commercials in one hour. What percentage of the hour was devoted to commercials?
14. Interview a variety of people to determine what commercials are heard and what information is

retained. Do commercials influence the people to buy products? Are some commercials annoying?

15. Record a series of commercials in one day's broadcasting. As a class, listen and discuss techniques of programming, including the music, sound effects, descriptive words, and types of voices used.

16. Listen to old-time radio programs. Interview parents and grandparents; then write about their favorite programs. Discuss whether present programs will be "old fashioned" in 25 years.

#### COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TV, NEWSPAPER, AND RADIO

**Goal**

Be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of television, radio, and the newspaper by comparing and contrasting. (6)

**Suggested Activities**

1. Develop a chart comparing the costs of advertising on radio and television. Prepare information on a transparency to present to class. Discuss which medium is most cost-effective.

2. Prepare a bulletin board illustrating the uses and values of radio and television in an emergency. This may be illustrated by pictures from the newspaper.

3. Listen to the evening news on television and list the major news items. Read the newspaper in the class the next morning. Compare the emphasis or bias in the news reporting of the two media.

4. Interview program managers of both a television station and a radio station via the conference telephone. Audiotape for future use. Ask why the type of programming is planned for local broadcasting. What criteria are used for selecting the programs?

5. View slides taken during a visit to a television studio and a radio station. Discuss the differences in equipment, facilities, and personnel and their relative costs. Emphasis should be placed on career opportunities.

## SECONDARY CURRICULUM

**Preface**

Children who live in a technological society should be technically fluent. They ought to be trained in the language of mass media just as surely as they are to be trained in the manipulation and development of verbal language. (Postman and Weingartner, 1969)

This statement, adapted from *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, is easily applicable to students at all academic levels, but it indicates that today's secondary student has accumulated a tremendous amount of exposure to the mass media. The media blitz of recent years has provided the secondary student with an expanded world view and a new perspective toward both education and society. Secondary education must recognize this impact of the mass media and must address itself to it.

**Need for Secondary Curriculum**

Although isolated efforts have been and are being made to consider secondary-level mass media curricula, the primary public concern seems to have been at the elementary level with issues of television violence and commercials and with mass media's ethics and morality. There are a number of significant reasons for placing equal emphasis upon the development of a secondary-level curriculum.

1. What research evidence there is suggests that the personal knowledge and values of adolescents are considerably affected and even determined by mass media.

2. If mass media do negatively affect learning, achievement, and academic motivation, this effect is strongest and most visible at the secondary level when peer pressure plays a particularly significant role. As such, it is critical that the issue of mass media be addressed at this stage in the individual's development.

3. Knowledge of human development reveals that at the adolescent stage an individual has acquired new capacities for critical thinking as well as for other high-level cognitive and affective tasks. These new abilities are essential to nurturing a complete set of mass media competencies.

4. Competencies in mass media awareness and utilization become survival skills for the graduating secondary student who finds himself/herself as the prime target for the merchandizing goals of mass media.

5. As individuals who may soon find themselves heading families, it is important that these students come to grips with mass media's influence upon the American family and with the methods by which families can best cope with the associated problems.

While these factors are only a sample of those which might have been cited, it is in light of these that the proposed guidelines for the development and implementation of a secondary-level curriculum in mass media competencies are offered. Although we believe that a secondary curriculum should ideally flow from a prerequisite curriculum at the elementary level, reality may negate this possibility because of constraints in particular districts and the need for immediate action at the junior and senior high school level is desirable. Therefore, these guidelines are offered for a curriculum which can be placed, in total or in part, into the existing curricula of a variety of schools. In other words, it

is recognized that the secondary level will mean different things for different schools. The section which follows deals with the mass media in terms of TV/film, radio, and newspaper/magazine.

**Curriculum Characteristics**

The philosophy underlying this curriculum rests, in part, on four characteristics which are neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive.

*Flexible*

The most critical attribute of a newly designed secondary curriculum is flexibility. The variations among secondary schools and their educational philosophies may demand a curriculum which is adaptable to a number of contexts. It must be usable with students differing in grade and/or ability level. It is conceivable that the curriculum may be implemented as a separate course in one school (e.g., year-long, half-year, minicourse), while a second school might integrate the curriculum into existing courses (e.g., English, Social Studies, Mathmatics). Thus, the course may be either self-standing or integrated. Similarly, whatever the curriculum, there must be varied levels of detail to accommodate the possible differences. Figures 1 and 2 highlight what is meant by curriculum flexibility. Note in Figure 2 that different activities will be selected depending upon the form and requisite detail of the curriculum adopted.

*Experiential*

The mass media can only be truly understood if they are experienced. Therefore, it is proposed that any curriculum at the secondary level should incorporate a large number of activities which allow the student to study mass media through both real and contrived experiences. The goal/activity section of this report will reflect such philosophy by incorporating activities which ask students to personally address current examples of mass media in light of their own values and beliefs.

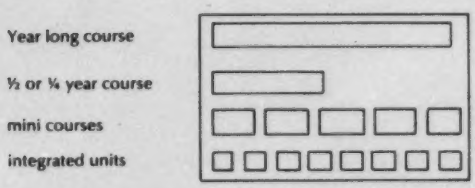


**Figure 1: Possible Modes of Implementing the Curriculum**

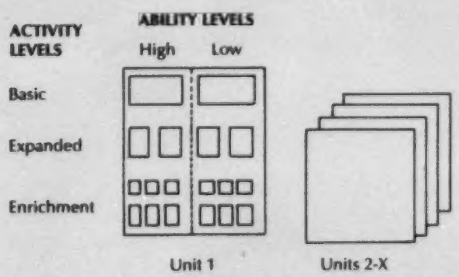


**Figure 2: Curriculum Structures Flexibility in Levels and Detail of Activities.**

**Pervasive**

Another key attribute of an effective curriculum in mass media competencies is the pervasiveness of that curriculum. What occurs within the course or curriculum is also experienced outside the school setting. Where possible, the curriculum should build in activities which publicize what is being studied and attempt to utilize community resources. For example, the use of guest speakers and field trips to TV studios can be planned.

*Motivating*

Any successful form of curriculum or instruction must also address student motivation. Although this is an obvious statement, it is too often overlooked. The curriculum must be structured to build upon the existing motivations of the students while at the same time attempting to enhance motivation. Curriculum content and activities should be planned to arouse student interest and curiosity while also satisfying other possible social needs such as achievement and affiliation.

**Curriculum Content**

Many different approaches can be explored by educators and media specialists when they are considering the actual introduction or adoption of a mass media curriculum at the secondary level. It is imperative that schools reevaluate how they relate to the mass media. A number of federal reports have stated a need for schools to emphasize skills for sorting out and integrating the variety of values and information that bombard students in a world of instant mass communication. This then should be the guidepost for the development of a secondary curriculum.

The ability to select and retrieve information promises to be one of the most powerful and important contributions of technology to a society that is increasingly dependent on its need for diverse information. Yet in order to make efficient and meaningful use of information, citizens require the necessary skills for interpreting information, whether it be visual, audio, or cursive in nature.

Except for a handful of schools, no one in education is attempting to train children or adults to interpret the mass media. Even the few schools making the attempt pay only token attention to these important skills. This is true, despite the recognition of the importance of these skills and despite the availability of a vast reservoir of information relevant to instruction.

There are many possibilities for utilizing media content in different courses of the school program. The major limit to these possibilities exists in the minds of the professionals who help to design and administer these programs. It is recommended that this pattern of utilization (content offered in many courses—integrated units) be adopted whenever possible because it seems to be educationally most sound. It is known that ideas are better retained by the learner if he/she is learning the idea at the appropriate time and in the correct context. This method also insures that all students, even those who transfer into a building or unit, will be assured of having some formal training in the area of mass media.

In addressing topical areas which should include television, film, radio, and newspapers and magazines, it is suggested that the content of the curriculum utilize already existing mass media materials wherever possible. The most obvious example would be the teacher's use of programs on television. (Copyright regulations must be fully explored and understood, of course, before attempting to use this format.) Television programming responds to many political, economic, and social issues to which the teacher should be constantly alert. *TV Guide* and local and/or area newspapers describe upcoming programs so that assignments for viewing or schedules for taping can be planned ahead by the professional. In addition to program listing, these sources also provide articles about topics of interest in the media field.

In addition, materials by the private agency Prime Time School Television (PTST) can be utilized in this curriculum. PTST publishes study guides each month for selected programs and includes annotated calendars that include noteworthy programs not covered in the guides. PTST is also developing curriculum units which focus on the resource potential of television's regularly scheduled fare. Four such units have been developed: police and the law, values education, economics, and commercials and the economics of television, all of which employ television as the central instructional tool. Students are asked to watch programs on commercial television and to react to them. Viewing logs are used and discussion in class follows. In addition, outside readings in related areas are required. PTST is proposing the development of a series of critical guidelines for viewing and talking about television programs. A curriculum unit would then be developed around these guidelines and would be introduced into the schools.

Besides these television examples, there are also many sources of radio broadcasting available, including recordings of samples from early days of radio. Teachers and pupils can gain a sense of the history of radio broadcasting by using some of these older examples as well as current programs. Programs can be found to complement themes taught in language arts, social studies, and music classes, to name a few. These programs are relatively inexpensive and, generally, easily obtainable.

Although a curriculum could most effectively be used as an integrated part of existing courses, some schools may indeed prefer to develop a specific course in mass media competencies. This requires a series of flexible units which address specific topics under each major topical heading—television, film, radio, newspaper/magazines. No attempt has been made here to outline several possible curriculum units. The section which follows will allow considerable inference as to what such an outline might look like.

#### GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The curriculum in the secondary school should reflect general and specific goals and suggested activities to carry them out. The local educational configuration can adapt or adopt specific objectives. The following are not meant to be definitive but are suggested examples: The students in the media curriculum will:

1. Understand the processes necessary in working from a topic statement to create an essay: Read and discuss features from the editorial page, noting that these personal opinions are set off from hard fact by their placement.
2. Develop an appreciation of the technique involved in summarizing a news item in one sentence: Study news stories to find examples of the various kinds of leads and the pyramid vs. block format.
3. Develop an interest in reading by locating articles which discuss subjects of interest to the reluctant reader: Students develop a file on a sports team or personality, popular entertainer or group, a regular column of TV/film reviews, or advice to the lovelorn.
4. Participate in a writing exercise by using pictures from the paper: Cut caption off dramatic pictures and have students explain in 100 words or less what they see.
5. Understand the need for truth in publishing by

studying libel and slander laws: Local editor and station manager address groups on the precautions they must take to avoid lawsuit in their operations.

6. Demonstrate an ability to discern whether the media are overstepping the limits of good taste and privacy in featuring certain stories: Students should search through magazines and newspapers and make note of TV and radio newscasts which they feel are designed more to sell the product than to illustrate a facet of the human condition.

7. Develop an understanding of the importance of access by the media to public records and their duty to reveal all aspects of governmental operations: Students should be looking for examples of obstructionist moves by governmental agencies when the media seek access to records, and take an in-depth look at the situation when a politician complains that a story should not have been run.

8. Decide whether the media provide a forum for those who hold points of view which differ from the media: By clipping editorials and, subsequently, letters to the editor, students may compare the amounts of space devoted to arguments and rebuttals.

9. Evaluate to what degree local news coverage in print, radio, or TV is being effectively handled: Students can run a count of column inches of newsprint, comparing wire service, state, and local coverage. A similar technique in electronics would be to list and time (stopwatch) local coverage.

10. Study the balance between editorial policies and the economics of producing revenues through advertising: The students can seek to compare editorials with ads that contain inflated claims, half-truths, or promote films and TV programs whose content may be salacious or not in the best interests of the viewing public.

11. Practice writing to meet specific objectives in a highly ego- involved mode: After scanning classified "Help Wanted" ads, students will write a letter of application, crediting themselves with what they feel would be desirable job-related skills.

12. Demonstrate understanding of the need for accurate data to substantiate opinion: Students will write letters to the editor rebutting an editorial or news story, but *only* when able to produce hard data for support.

13. Develop awareness of the richness and variety of language found in the media: Students will prepare a "top ten" list of words or phrases encountered in any form of media on a given day, which triggered the most vivid images.

14. Appreciate the contribution of cartoon art, both comic and editorial: Conduct a survey of which comics are favorites and why; could any also appear on the editorial page? Analyze how well editorial cartoonists can capture a situation in few or no words; that is, a president steam-rollered by labor, etc.

15. Understand and appreciate the essence of a good interview. Both in print and on (video) tape, students will conduct interviews, seeking to elicit information about the subject and/or opinions about current events.

16. Discern some techniques of writing concise biographical sketches: Students will prepare a bulletin board containing clips from background stories on political candidates, those who achieve overnight notoriety, and those who are written up in obituaries.

17. Learn to discriminate between media accounts concerning strange lands and people, and those of more objective sources: Groups will be split, with some students recording impressions gained from media, others checking library references; groups rejoin to compare notes.

18. Become aware that the media are possibly being manipulated by political and activist sources: Students will attempt to list stories which appear in the media in which relatively small groups are involved; try to determine whether appearance in news programs is an accurate reflection of the merits of a political candidate.

19. Keep abreast of developments in science which are too new for reference books: Depending on course content, some students will be responsible for maintaining clipping files on: medical research, radiation, pollution, space technology, etc.

20. Effect remediation of math skills by referring to media ads and news in preparing a household budget: Starting with food ads and working up to monthly payments for advertised items, students will attempt to grasp fundamentals of the complexities of dining out, paying for utilities, generally living within a budget.

21. Realize further applications of more sophisticated math by applying it to math references in media: Students will compute sports averages, convert to metric terms, determine the true cost of interest-bearing items, etc.

22. Have an opportunity to put into practice various economic theories: Given a certain "paper" sum of money, students will operate within the stock market for a specific period, attempting to build on capital through investment.

23. Investigate the appeal and points of view of a representative cross-section of magazines: Given a list of magazines available in the school media center, students will attempt to identify to which groups or interests a magazine is directed, and whether there is an implicit or explicit bias present in editorial policy.

24. Develop an awareness of the importance of marketing in the media field: Students will participate in a series of panel discussions analyzing what target audiences are sought by TV, radio, newspapers, and magazines.

25. Find in media coverage a variety of topics for debates and term papers: Students prepare a list of the topics most frequently mentioned in media, developing a list of subjects they would like to cover in depth either in a debate forum or in an individual term paper.

26. Investigate the lifestyles the media seem to be promoting to the benefit of producers of consumable goods: Students will make notes on the environment surrounding characters in magazine stories and TV shows and films. Does the standard of living seem appropriate for the occupation of the central character? (Dress, furniture, entertainment, transportation, etc.)

27. Be alert to broad, sweeping statements in mass advertising: Study the semantics of overkill, half-truths, and misleading phrases.

28. Rate television programs on the basis of enjoyment and enrichment: Class may design a rating scale of 1-10 indicating least to most entertaining and then apply it to several selected programs and study the outcomes. Students should explain their choices for the most-popular and least-popular programs.

29. Develop ability to discern the degree of reality in mass media programs: Students select several programs on TV and rate them on a scale of least realistic to most representative of life situations and discuss the reasons.

30. Recognize the general techniques used in persuasive advertising and propaganda: Analyze the speed of several commercials to see if it is a decisive factor in the persuasiveness of the message.

31. Use viewing and listening skills to comprehend, recall and accurately repeat what the students view and hear: Students will view a "special" on TV dealing with a specific topic. Through a panel discussion they discuss its content related to facts and understandings.

32. Study and recognize the lifestyles and stereotypes that appear in the media: Sometimes the code of conduct for the heroes in a drama is "the end justifies the means." Conventional morality is lightly put aside. Discuss these situations in an attempt to evaluate the prevailing morality.

33. Critically assess and judge the content of media in terms of previously acquired knowledge and attitudes, and resolve discrepancies (i.e., between the new and old, between ethnic stereotypes and reality, etc.): Have students write a character description of the role of a typical TV policeman(woman) or detective and discuss it in class. Invite the counterpart in the community to come into the class and discuss his/her real role. Resolve any differences.

34. Apply and expand the skills necessary to utilize the Instructional Media Center: Students could produce a TV commercial on videotape, mediate reports to class, excerpt information from film and/or filmstrips for class presentations, use slides or color prints to illustrate a concept or general information for reports, write reports, or develop graphics to use in presentations.

35. Recognize human values presented in certain situations: Select specific segments of programs illustrating positive examples of human values such as loving care, respect, concern, integrity of the individual, etc., and discuss in class.

36. Assess the value of TV rating systems and investigate their validity: Students will study the weekly releases concerning most- and least-watched shows. These should be compared to rate fees for commercials. Discuss what this does to "serious" and "cultural" broadcasts.

37. Evaluate the degree to which broadcasters fulfill their obligations as users of the public airwaves: Students can prepare lists of what public services are being performed now with regard to the relicensing regulations, and what other services could be of value.

38. Analyze students' media habits and examine their selections: Each student will keep a media diary, noting what newspapers and magazines were read, radio station most frequently tuned in and TV shows watched. At the end of a month, he/she will try to identify a pattern in this.

39. Have an opportunity to see the actual production of media products: Students will take field trips to nearby newspaper plants, radio and TV stations

40. Evaluate the importance of media carriers in student life: Students will be asked to consider all the entertainment and communications machines they have access to and give up all but one.

## PROFESSIONAL CURRICULUM

### Preface

The success of mass media literacy programs rests largely with the preparation of elementary and secondary education professionals. It is desirable that the course be conducted as a preservice requirement and that the course instill basic media literacy competencies.

The approach recognizes the pervasiveness and persuasiveness of mass media and deals with all forms of mass media communication. It assumes no inherent value or moral judgments and it does not seek to define the mass media beyond those communication forms generally recognized by the mass media consumer public. The most important goal or objective is to induce appropriate assimilation skills which will allow learners to deal with mass media messages in an effective and beneficial manner.

### Professional Curriculum: Course of Study

*Introduction to the Course*

Hardly an hour passes without our minds being massaged by the mass media.

Each year over 35,000 new books are published in the United States. Ayer's *Directory* lists more than 9,600 periodicals in our country, with an estimated 3 million copies sold daily, and more than 11,000 papers, including underground publications. More than 30 million comic books are circulated each month by only seven of the comic book publishers. Every week about 45 million persons attend one of the 450 movies produced annually. More than 372 million radios are tuned to 7,430 AM and FM stations, and more than 48 million phonographs play more than 10,000 new singles and LP's each year. Americans in 99 percent of the nation's households can view their 108 million television sets, selecting shows from the programming of 931 television stations. (Voelker and Voelker, 1975, p. 23)

With this kind of pervasiveness, it is paramount for all people, especially those in education, to become aware of how the mass media influence their lives. Moreover, it is desirable if not necessary that professional educators serve as the means of harnessing mass media potential to serve the public good from both a classroom and lifelong learning perspective. To these ends, the following course syllabus in Mass Media Literacy

has been developed.

**GOALS OF THE COURSE**

1. The learner will be able to discuss the impact of mass media on society in terms of social, political, and economic ramifications.
2. The learner will identify and analyze the form, structure, and organization of the mass media.
3. The learner will be able to understand communication theory as it relates to purpose, models, and assimilation skills.
4. The learner will be able to recognize how mass media shape attitudes through message manipulation and the unique character of each medium.
5. The learner will be able to evaluate, select, adapt, and apply mass media to the teaching/learning process.
6. The learner will become knowledgeable concerning the channels through which changes in mass media can be effected.

**OBJECTIVES**

Based on the general goals listed above, each educational unit adopting this course of study has the freedom to develop unique enabling objectives for specific learning situations. This will permit the individualization of this course to meet the assessed needs of the students in a particular educational setting.

**TOPIC OUTLINE**

1. Impact of mass media on society
   a. Economic
   b. Family
   c. Political
   d. Health—mental and physical
   e. Time
   f. Educational
   g. Cultural
   h. Values
   i. Sociological
2. Forms of mass media
   a. Print media: newspapers, periodicals, books
   b. Electronic media: television, radio, film, audio recordings
3. Structure and organization of mass media
   a. Print media: newspapers, periodicals, books
   b. Electronic media: television, radio, film, audio recordings
4. Communication theory
   a. Purpose: informing, entertaining, persuading, educating
   b. Models
   c. Assimilation skills: perception, visual literacy, listening skills, verbal literacy
5. Effect of mass media on learners
   a. Attitude formation
   b. Message discrimination
   c. Message manipulation: propaganda, bandwagon, advertising
6. Discriminant utilization of mass media
   a. Selection
   b. Evaluation
   c. Applications in the teaching/learning process
   d. Adaptation of methods in the teaching/learning process
7. Impacting the mass media
   a. Action groups
   b. Individual action
   c. Research
   d. Political process
   e. Legal action

**LEARNING ACTIVITIES**

A suggested beginning list of learning activities, keyed to the topic outline, follows. It must be recognized that these are general activities which need to be refined so that they can be used to achieve specific objectives within the broad goals.

1. Analyze mass media programming to determine which elements of society have been able to expose their views (1, 4, 6, 7).
2. Select a news event and compare its treatment among the mass media (1, 4, 5).
3. Research, through a daily log, personal viewing, listening, and reading habits (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).
4. Examine public service programming for such things as: time, characteristics, scheduling, frequency, content, etc. (1, 2, 4, 5, 7).
5. Identify community groups to determine their mass media utilization and/or consumption (1, 5, 6).
6. Organize activities around the availability and content of mass media public files (1, 3, 7).
7. Construct a nutritional intake chart based upon products in TV advertising (1).
8. Interview a bookstore manager to determine selection policy (1, 5, 7).
9. Familiarize the learner with reference tools necessary to study the mass media (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7).
10. Analyze particular aspects of mass media, such as advertising, for stereotyping, values, cultural implications, etc. (1, 5, 6).
11. Study the "lifestyle" of a variety of mass media personalities in relationship to values (1, 5).
12. Search out and identify citizen action groups dealing with mass media (1, 7).
13. Create models for analysis of the various mass media in terms of form, structure, organization, etc. (2, 3).
14. Investigate special services that mass media organizations provide for classroom instruction (6).
15. Outline a plan for personal development of mass media literacy (5, 6).
16. Design, produce, and utilize evaluation forms to analyze a variety of mass media programming (1, 5, 6).
17. Design analysis activities such as:
    a. Production costs of commercial vs. programming for a one- hour program (2, 3).
    b. Production costs of various mass media (2, 3).
    c. Mass media profits (2, 3).
    d. Who controls mass media (2, 3).
18. Create experimental studies to compare the effect of mass media on local activities (1, 4, 5).
19. Contrast the treatment of a message among two or more mass media, for example, film vs. book (2, 4, 6).

20. Identify the literacy level for the various mass media (4, 5).

21. Develop a mediagraphy of available materials dealing with mass media utilization in the classroom, that is, prime-time school television (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7).

## SUMMARY STATEMENT

The impact of mass media within both the formal and informal educational process is highly speculative at best. There is, by necessity, a crying need for research, but that by itself should not deter educators from effecting a curricular change to take advantage of what is known about communication.

The three models suggested in this work have been developed to provide flexibility for implementation in curricula at three levels of education. The content is broadly stated so that an assessment of needs can dictate its final scope in any individual school. When implemented systematically, it should become a part of the total curriculum and subjected to the same evaluation process as other facets thereof.

Whatever curriculum project may be undertaken, a systematic instructional development model, with heavy emphasis on ongoing evaluation, should be used.

Formative evaluation should be viewed as the most critical in the curriculum process since its prime concern will be improving the curriculum as it is designed and developed. This process should involve various strategies for learner verification, as well as having the form and content of the curriculum assessed by various relevant parties.

Once implemented, the curriculum should continue to be evaluated by systematic methods to assess direct and indirect cognitive and affective effects upon all who have been exposed to it—students, teachers, parents, and others. It is also suggested that plans be made for longitudinal evaluation which will study the effects of the curriculum over time.

Finally, implementation of any curriculum should include guidelines and a plan for maintenance evaluation. This will involve periodic assessment of the form and content of the curriculum for the purpose of updating both areas. Without this, and because of the speed with which the mass media changes, any curriculum effort would surely have a short life and prevent the effort from being cost-effective. With conscious attempts to integrate this and the other modes of evaluation, the likelihood of successful mass media curricula will be greatly enhanced.

Inherent in successful curriculum implementation at the elementary or secondary level is a professional cadre of educators well-versed in mass media literacy. Perhaps its immediate implementation, when considering the status quo, may be quite different from any media skills integrated into the curriculum of the future. By necessity, however, if the educational process is to benefit immediately, curricular proposals as presented here take on added significance. The first step is to begin.

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# Evaluation and Utilization of Mass Media

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*Rationale:* This committee has developed the following working paper in an attempt to inspire someone to look into research and the development of instruments to assess students' needs for competencies relating to mass media.

## INTRODUCTION

Thoreau has said, "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he marches to the beat of a different drummer." In keeping with this thought, if a learner does not learn in the same manner as his/her companions, perhaps he/she can learn through a different medium of communication. The learner must, then, become proficient in the use of media. There can be little doubt that in today's society people are being affected by mass media. This is reflected both in learning patterns and lifestyles.

For educators, this clearly is a call to provide and utilize media that are relevant to today's learners. Media, in all forms, should be considered and selected for integration into the curriculum at all levels. Educators must be competent in the mass media to effectively utilize these tools to their best advantage. It is imperative that quality media be presented, and that media should reflect the intent and purpose of the educator. The media must also fulfill the needs of the learner.

Learners should have the opportunity to explore the many facets of each medium, or those in which they have a specific interest. By fully understanding the technical aspects of a medium, such as film, photography, or newspapers, the learners can better assess the values of the media. The role of the educational technologist would, therefore, be as a change agent in curriculum development, teacher awareness and inservice, and supportive of learners' needs and interests. Knowledge and skill would become partners with responsibility. As educators or educational technologists, we do have the responsibility to distinguish, interpret, and disseminate mass media as effective, positive tools for lifelong learning.

The following sample survey and questionnaire have been developed to assist the classroom teacher, or media specialist, to ascertain the mass media competencies of individual learners. The questionnaire is divided into two distinct sections. The first section is a manipulative inventory. The learner is asked to perform certain tasks with media and/or various pieces of equipment to facilitate the use of media. The second part of the questionnaire determines the technical and discriminatory knowledge the learner has at his/her command.

It is felt that the work of this committee is closely related to the work of the committees on Integrating Mass Media Literacy into the Curriculum, and Characteristics of Mass Media Literacy.

## SURVEY

A. Television
1. How many television sets do you have in your home?
2. Circle the average number of hours per day you spend watching television.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 more than 8
3. List the programs you usually watch.

4. What is your favorite program?
5. What channel do you prefer?
6. What influences your choice of programs?
7. With whom do you watch television?
8. What other activities do you do while watching television?
9. Is it "easy" to turn off the television when you have other responsibilities?
Yes No
10. With whom do you discuss television shows?
11. How often do you discuss television shows with others?
often seldom never

B. Radio
12. How many radios do you have?
13. Circle the average number of hours per day you spend listening to the radio.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 more than 8
14. What types of programs do you prefer?
15. What is your favorite program?
16. What station/announcer do you prefer?
17. What influences your choice of programs?
18. With whom do you listen to radio?
19. What other activities do you do while listening to the radio?
20. With whom do you discuss radio programs?
21. How often do you discuss radio programs with others?
often seldom never

C. Film
22. Circle how often you go to the movies.
less than 3 times a month
3 times a month
more than 3 times a month
23. What types of movies do you attend?
24. What is your favorite movie?
25. What influences your choice of movies?
26. With whom do you go to the movies?
27. With whom do you discuss the movies?
28. How often do you discuss the movies with others?
often seldom never

D. Recording
29. Check which of the following you have.
record player
8-track tape player
cassette player
reel-to-reel tape player
30. Circle the average number of hours per day you spend listening to the above.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 more than 8
31. What kinds of audio recordings do you buy?
32. What is your favorite recording?
33. What influences your choice of recordings?
34. With whom do you listen to these recordings?
35. How often do you discuss these recordings with others?
36. What other activities do you do while listening to recordings?
37. How often do you discuss recordings with others?
often seldom never

E. Newspapers
38. How many newspapers do you have in your home?
39. How many minutes per day do you spend reading the newspaper?
15 30 45 60 120 more than 120
40. What sections do you read?
41. What is your favorite section?
42. Which paper do you prefer?
43. What influences your choice of newspapers?
44. What other activities do you do while reading the newspaper?
45. With whom do you discuss the news stories?

F. Magazines
46. How many magazines do you read?
47. Which magazines do you read?
48. What influences your choice of magazines?
49. What other activities do you do while reading a magazine?

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Part I—Manipulative**

1. Demonstrate the following:
   a. turning on television
   b. selecting channel
   c. adjusting tuning
   d. turning off television
2. Demonstrate the following:
   a. ability to turn on the radio
   b. select your favorite AM and/or FM station
   c. adjust fine tuning
3. Select one of the following films and prepare for showing:
   a. 16 mm film
   b. 8 mm film
   c. 35 mm film
4. Select one of the following recordings and demonstrate its use:
   a. cassette
   b. record
   c. 8-track
5. Locate the classified ad section in your newspaper to find out about pets available in your community. List three telephone numbers to contact.
6. Locate the table of contents and list the number of articles in the magazine.
7. Locate the publishing information and subscription rates in any given magazine.

**Part II—Technical and Discriminatory**

1. Check which of the following equipment is needed for producing a television show.
   a. camera
   b. monitor
   c. enlarger
   d. videotape recorder
   e. microphones
2. A television program originates in which of the following:
   a. broadcast tower
   b. television studio
   c. in your home television
3. A live program from another part of the world may be broadcast to your home via:
   a. video tape
   b. the moon
   c. satellite
4. A program which would offer facts to you is:
   a. soap opera

b. news program
c. variety show

5. To which of the following can you go for guidance in selecting television programs:
a. *TV Guide*
b. newspapers
c. *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*
d. magazine reviews

6. The technique used to show the opening of a flower in ten seconds is which of the following:
a. instant replay
b. time-lapse photography
c. slow motion

7. If you want to use the radio without disturbing anyone else you would:
a. hide in the closet
b. ask everyone to leave
c. use headphones

8. In producing a radio program versus a television program you would use:
a. more equipment
b. less equipment
c. equal amounts of equipment

9. What does FCC mean?
a. Federal Citizens Commission
b. Federal Communications Commission
c. Federal Critics Committee

10. Check which of the following types of programs you may hear on the radio.
a. news
b. talk shows
c. program showing the different colors of fish
d. popular music

11. The jingle "You deserve a break today, so get up and get away" is an example of:
a. news program
b. talk show
c. commercial

12. Check which of the following are parts of a well-produced film.
a. credits
b. producer
c. title
d. name of theater
e. list of congressmen

13. A transition in film can mean:
a. change in time
b. change of location
c. change of perspective

14. Assume the following events were shown in a film. Which are real and could be done by a real person with safety?
a. riding horseback
b. jumping off a ten-story building
c. walking through a flaming building
d. climbing mountains
e. flying through the air on a broom
f. walking through walls

15. Which of the following ratings of motion-picture films would be appropriate for family viewing?
a. X
b. R
c. G
d. XX
e. PG

16. What is the minimum number of speakers needed for a stereo?
a. one
b. four
c. zero
d. two

17. What is the function of the groove on a record?
a. for controlling the speed
b. the track for the needle
c. for placement on the turntable

18. Check which of the following items can always be found on a record album cover.
a. title
b. producer
c. artist
d. dances to perform
e. copyright information
f. speed

19. Which of the following would be included in the masthead of a newspaper?
a. weather
b. date
c. name of paper
d. price
e. horoscopes
f. place of publication

20. Which of the following are included in a daily newspaper format?
a. births and deaths
b. sports
c. entertainment
d. comics

21. The first paragraph of a news article usually contains the following information:
a. Who
b. What
c. Why
d. When
e. How
f. Where

22. An accident that occurred at 6:00 p.m. would first be reported in:
a. the next morning's newspaper
b. that evening's newspaper

23. Pictures are included with a news story to:
a. "read"
b. add interest
c. clarify
d. take up space

24. Which of the following would be considered a special interest magazine?
a. *Hot Rod*
b. *Science for Children*
c. *Time*
d. *Field and Stream*
e. *Saturday Evening Post*

25. To identify a magazine article on a specific subject, one would look in the:
a. recipe file
b. card catalog
c. vertical file
d. *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*

26. Which of the following help pay for the publication costs of a magazine.
a. national debt

b. advertising revenue
c. cost of corn in Iowa
d. subscription income
e. author

**UTILIZATION OF MASS MEDIA**

*Note:* The effective use of mass media in the classroom is limited only by the imagination of the teacher and the needs of the student. Following is a list of suggested ideas for using mass media which might stimulate the imagination of a teacher to adapt some for use in the classroom. No attempt has been made to separate these into categories, age levels, or subject areas, as many can be applied in several ways.

1. Jumble several lines from a popular TV show dialogue. Have students sequence the lines.
2. Record the beginning, middle, or end of a radio (TV program); have students complete the missing portions.
3. Study sequential patterns of scheduling of programs on radio or TV.
4. Compare a complete commercial film with an educational film as to quality of visuals, audio quality, acting, content, etc.
5. Estimate a complete budget for the production of a commercial film (TV show).
6. Record a complete dramatic program, play back—stop at a high point of interest. Students should list three possible sequential actions and be able to justify each.
7. Keep a log of TV showings (by minutes) for two nights. Compute percentages of time spent on commercials, introductory procedures, program showings, etc.
8. Compare commercials on TV and radio. Which are most effective and why?
9. Produce a five-minute film via preparing a script and visuals for a story board.
10. Research animation techniques. Prepare visuals for a one- minute film using one of the techniques.
11. Read TV or radio scripts for reading practice.
12. Get old TV commercial film reels from local TV station, use as a practice film for learning to use projectors, splice, etc. Use as an example to produce a short ad.
13. Arrange to have one of your student helpers to "work" in a local newspaper office (radio station, TV studio). Have him/her share experiences with the class.
14. Prepare and broadcast a news program.
15. Maintain a "news capsule for the day" bulletin board.
16. View or listen to a given program and describe the plot, theme, and main characters.
17. View three cereal commercials. Rewrite these same commercials and leave out any "propaganda."
18. Are the characters believable in your favorite TV series? Give an example and tell why.
19. View a science program on television. Locate information in your media center on this subject. Does the information seem to be correct? Write an article and show any differences.
20. Take a given program and, after viewing, rewrite the ending.
21. Listen to a drama on the radio. Rewrite the script for videotaping.
22. Use a musical recording to develop story lines or for creative writing.
23. Listen to three different types of musical recordings and illustrate (draw a picture to show the emotional impact you feel, or create movement to express this feeling).
24. Use an evening news show to identify origin on a map.
25. Put together your own magazine.
26. Select pictures from magazines to use for creative writing, or to write captions.
27. Assign a viewing monitor for the day for various subject areas. Have monitors report anything that they might view, read, or hear, which applies to that subject area on the following day.
28. Make a collage from magazine pictures, ads, or lettering.
29. Design ads for specific products.
30. Compare an ad in the newspaper to a similar one in a magazine.
31. Design an ad for TV—videotape it.
32. Pick out the "real" things which happened in a certain TV program.
33. Pick out the "fake" things which happened in a certain TV program.
34. Make up a story about a real event.
35. Develop a news interest center.
36. Find various forms of charts from newspapers and magazines.
37. Find various forms of graphs from printed mass media items.
38. Prepare a pie graph showing the amount of space used in a certain newspaper or magazine devoted to advertising, major articles, headline space, and pictures.
39. Cut apart cartoon pictures, mount and laminate, use with students for sequencing.
40. Teach the main ideas for using a film or newspaper.
41. Compose your own newspaper with main stories, cartoons, ads, and editorial.
42. Compare three different magazine ads of the same type of product.
43. Distinguish between fact and fantasy in a program.
44. Distinguish between literature and reporting in a program.
45. Pick out the pronouns from a recording.
46. Produce all types of media forms.
47. Given five specific types of magazines, design covers for each.
48. Record your favorite story and put in media center.
49. Compare news version on TV vs. radio vs. magazine or newspaper. Show differences—which has greatest impact, which tells the real thing?
50. Compare a TV production of a story with a book and/or film production.
51. Identify technological techniques which might have been used to show various trick scenes in a TV production.
52. Report an event in the school—in four different

ways showing the viewpoint of four different individuals (principal, coach, teacher, boy, girl).

53. Find examples of the six major propaganda techniques, then design a series of political plugs that utilize each of these techniques for radio or TV (30-second spots).

54. Map the route of a state official as he/she makes a trip. Research the countries visited. How does our culture compare to the others?

55. Use old newspapers for strips for making paper mache items.

56. Practice outlining on news stories, magazine fiction, or TV or radio show.

57. Identify TV characters and list their character traits.

58. Use a program such as "Roots" to stimulate interest in genealogy research.

59. Study the sequence of programming on TV and try to develop a pattern from the same.

60. List the five main events—introduction, problem, search for solution, solution, and ending—in a given program.

61. Read an editorial in a newspaper or magazine, then collect data to support or disagree with the position taken.

## CLOSING STATEMENT

Following the use of a survey and questionnaire as needs- assessment tools, educators should implement a plan of learning activities to enable the learner to become proficient, or literate, or competent in various media. These skills should be considered basic to today's society and lifestyles.

This committee wishes to thank their colleagues for their critique of preliminary efforts. It is our concern and feeling that a position should be declared at this time. Our committee, therefore, presents the following resolution:

Whereas our work as media professionals has convinced us of the need to improve teacher education, and

Whereas present teacher certification requirements in the majority of states do not include media competencies,

Be it resolved that the Okoboji Conference of 1978 recommend to the Board of Directors of AECT that an action program be instituted which is designed to include the media competencies identified by the Teacher Education Committee in all state teacher certification programs.

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# Form and Content of Television Programming: Informal Learning

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## INTRODUCTION

TV is part of contemporary life. We must confront it, think about it, accept it or reject it.

TV has become a shaping force on the American character. It is seen as reality and as a source of authority about life. This molding is almost completely outside the awareness of the viewer. It exerts a great influence upon the shaping of character when character is considered as the long-term expectations and responses of a person—automatic, repetitive, more or less conscious. The customary repeated experience of television structures the viewer's whole idea of the world and his/her relation to it. It is here that permanent responses to television lie; it is here that character is formed, for these attitudes are what the viewer then takes into the rest of his/her experience. (Glynn, E.D., 1968, p. 77)

Key (1972, p. 86) felt that "the most effective general technique in the care and feeding of media audiences is simply to tell them what they want to hear or what they need to hear, at both the conscious and the unconscious level."

The question has been brought forth that with all the negative criticism of TV programming, why does the audience keep watching?

Learning in an informal situation from TV involves two types or level of messages sent: *overt*, or those messages recognized as part of the learning experience or those selected by the learner; and *covert*, or hidden messages. These hidden messages may be designed into the structure of the message or may be inadvertantly placed in the message.

## THE HIDDEN AGENDA

Hidden messages in the TV medium are found in two structures: the form and the content. Form and content are interrelated and often interdependent.

### Form and Structure Effects

The form and structure of TV may indeed be more effective in its impact on human learning and behaviors than the content of the TV programs themselves. Due to the unique characteristics of the form of TV, the viewing audience may be receiving and processing information and experiences unconsciously. An increased awareness of the characteristics of the form and structure of TV is necessary in order to further develop understanding and proper utilization of TV as a vehicle of learning. McLuhan felt that electronic technology promoted involvement, causing the older techniques of education by observation to be outdated.

Marshall McLuhan also stated the effect of mass media when he concluded that the "medium is the message." McLuhan said (1967, p. 8), "The medium, or process, of our time—electronic technology—is reshaping and restructuring patterns of social interdependence and every aspect of our personal life." Therefore, it is the

form as well as the content of the message that affects learning. One of the most popular forms of electronic technology which is ever present in the life of the American citizen is television. Broadcast TV has its own particular effects as a learning resource. Some of those effects are discussed below.

*Subliminal Messages* / Hidden messages purposefully designed into the message to be received by the learner at a subconscious level rather than a conscious level are called subliminals for the purpose of this report. The use of subliminals in advertising and commercials on TV has been discussed by several authorities, among them Wilson Bryan Key. While, according to Key, subliminals are generally used in advertising for the sale of goods, they can be used to develop a favorable attitude toward political, social, or educational objectives. Key (1976, p. 7) defines subliminal stimuli as "that group of consciously unperceived words and picture symbols purposefully designed into media with the motive of soliciting, manipulating, modifying, or managing human behavior." The very form and technical nature of TV makes it particularly susceptible to the applications of subliminals.

The capability to exercise the techniques of subliminal communication and subliminal learning apparently exist in a refined state. It is a subject for open debate and consideration as to what, if any, subliminal learning techniques are appropriate and ethical for use in a learning situation, informal or formal.

*One-way Communication* / The one-way presentation and "no response" allowance to the learner gives television an authoritarian character. The viewer is not able to talk back to the presenter and therefore assumes a child role, making the TV the parent authority figure.

*Passivity* / Consumers of television are passive. They tend to allow the TV program selected to do "it" to them and do not/cannot do anything other than respond affectively and internally to the stimulus. The mental processing happens automatically without the person being aware of the processes taking place.

*Production Techniques* / The production of television has evolved into an art sometimes similar to and sometimes different from the commercial film. A new "grammar" of visual communication has been created by producers and taught through experience to the viewing audience. These techniques and the learning of them bends the thinking of the viewer gradually to the thinking of the producer of the program or commercial.

*Repetition* / One of TV's unique characteristics is its capacity for repetition. Whereas instructors may tire or become bored with repeated messages, TV can go on tirelessly. Repeating a message time and again ingrains information into the minds of the viewers. Ad campaigns may succeed or fail as a result of how many times, how many people experience these messages.

*Time Structure* / a. 30-60 minute programming—Although the concept of scheduling our lives around the hour and the half-hour time segment is common, television tends to reinforce this behavior.
b. 30-60 second—The constant change to short, high power commercials could be influencing people to expect and *prefer* this type of communication as the norm.
c. Programming—The placement of various types of programs throughout the viewing day influences the time structure of day-to-day life. People eat their meals in relationship to when the national/local news programs are aired. Children rise early on Saturday mornings to see their favorite cartoon shows. Families decide whether to visit other people or not by what will be shown on TV on what day.

*Pacing* / TV by its very nature moves an audience along on a preset time schedule. The producer uses the time pacing capacity of TV to push his/her audience along or to slow it down. He/she can speed up or slow down responses as he/she wishes by manipulating the pacing of the program.

*High Involvement-Low Intensity* / McLuhan classifies various media forms as either "hot" or "cool." He further defines a "hot" medium as "one that extends one single sense in 'high definition'" (well filled with data). (McLuhan, 1964, p. 22). A "cool" medium is one that conversely provides little data, having "low definition," which requires the learner to fill in much of the data. TV, says McLuhan (1964, p. 311), is a "cool" medium except that it can be "hotted up" by dramatization. Thus, depending upon its applications, TV can obtain learner participation or involvment in a high degree.

*Uniformity of Experience* / Information is delivered unilaterally from one source to all viewers at the same time. It is possible for all members of a population to view and experience an event together. To an educator this offers an opportunity to share better teachers and methods

with an endless number of learners. Unique, rare, and expensive events can be shared with a much larger number of viewers than is possible without TV.

However, the national business/management structure of the TV industry seems to have a profound effect upon the perceptions people in one region of the country have of their counterparts in other areas. The portrayal of the "all American" family in situation comedies gives a distorted view that may not be recognized by the viewing public.

*Portability* / Due to the high amount of accessibility, television tends to be an ubiquitous event. Within the United States, the use of TV during recreational periods—for example, while at the beach, in the car, or on camping trips—shows the addiction that Americans have acquired during the last 15 years.

*Content Effects* / Mass media, especially television, are not simply the sum total of the actions they portray or of the messages that are perceived from these actions. Mass media also consist of various layers of meanings superimposed upon one another, all of which contribute to the effect. Hence, form dictates content. This heritage of polymorphic meanings has been taken over by the cultural industry inasmuch as what the form and structure convey becomes itself organized in order to enthrall the spectators on various psychological and cognitive levels, simultaneously. The hidden messages may be more important than the overt. Since these messages will escape the conscious perception and reflection process, they will sink into the spectator's subconscious.

Ted Carpenter, an anthropologist, states in a similar vein:

> We live inside our media. We are their content. Television images come at us so fast, in such profusion, that they engulf us, tattoo us. We're immersed, it's like skin diving. We're surrounded, and whatever surrounds, involves. Television doesn't just wash over us and then "go out of mind." It goes into mind, deep into mind. The subconscious is a world in which we store everything, not some thing, and television extends the subconscious.
> (Wood, Peter, "Television as Dream." Television as a Cultural Force, Praeger Publishers, New York, 1976.)

Electronic media in many cases have replaced the home, church, and school as the preserver and purveyor of cultural values and in the socialization process. Television has been observed as taking over the mythic role in our culture. Soap operas, situation comedies, westerns, and melodramas are the folk stories and mythology of yesteryears that convey and reinforce the values of society. It is obvious that the programming of TV and the accompanying commercials transmit a large amount of information relevant to these values or world view.

TV has had an enormous impact on people's understanding of our political system. People know now as they never knew before how conventions are run, how bills go through Congress, and how our legislators act. In some instances, this has led to a public outcry resulting in changes in the system. The immediate and pervasive involvement of the entire country in the Watergate crisis probably hastened and perhaps even caused the resignation of President Nixon.

Bringing into the American home almost instantaneous visual news reports of the combat actions during the Vietnam War showing the brutality and horror probably hastened or in fact brought about an end to that war. An interesting reflection would be to dwell upon what might have happened had the same type of news coverage and commentary occurred during the preceding world wars and the Korean conflict.

Through TV the individual learns such things as speech patterns, manners, conspicuous consumption, status consciousness, and the fantasy world of quick and easy solutions. Commercials, for example, make us all consumers of products and services which we may or may not need or which we could provide for ourselves.

Subconsciously the viewer believes that what he/she views on television is reality. He/she may be led to higher expectations, or influenced by stereotyped career models, sexual roles, and socioeconomic roles.

Although all the data are not in as yet on whether or not violence on TV can directly cause violence in the individual viewer, the pervasiveness of violence, either direct or assumed, in TV programming can no doubt have some effect on certain individual viewers. Alternative views suggest on the one hand that viewing violence causes violent behavior and on the other that viewing violence becomes an outlet and thus of itself becomes a deterent to individual violence.

We must be aware of and wary of those hidden messages which tend to impose standards with which consciously we may not agree but which tend to shape and control our thinking and our

society.

## SELF-DIRECTED INFORMAL LEARNING

In addition to the covert learning from TV discussed above, there also occurs overt, but informal, learning of content.

The learning is *overt* in the sense that the messages received and learned are not hidden in the form or content of TV, but are the openly intended messages designed into the TV programs or commercials.

More importantly, however, the learning is *informal*. It represents the use of TV by an individual for self-directed, self-selected learning. Before discussing the types of informal learning, it is important to distinguish between formal learning and informal learning.

Formal learning, the type we are most accustomed to seeing as learning which usually takes place in a school or business training setting, can be seen as having the following characteristics:

1. The purpose of the learning is set externally.
2. The resources used for learning are prestructured in design, selection, and utilization, and combined into instructional systems.
3. The selection and utilization of the resources is externally controlled. (AECT, 1977, p.3)

Informal learning, on the other hand, is far more pervasive, but is frequently not seen as learning at all. It has the following characteristics:

1. The purpose of the learning is set internally by the learner him/herself for his/her self-directed learning goals. (There is a purpose, however, as opposed to incidental learning.)
2. The resources used for learning are self-selected as individual, not necessarily learning resources.
3. The selection and utilization of the resources is internally controlled. (AECT, 1977, p.2)

For example, if a viewer watches a Jacques Cousteau special about *Atlantis*, he/she may learn about the history of Greece or the potentials of scuba diving. The learner decides to watch the program, what, if anything, he/she will learn from it, and if he/she wants to stop watching and/or learning. The same type of informal learning can take place from a so-called "entertainment" program, such as "All in the Family", a "news" program, such as the evening news or "60 Minutes"; an instructional program, such as "Sesame Street"; a "commercial"; a "quiz" program, such as "Hollywood Squares"; a "documentary" or "dramatization" program, such as "Holocaust" and "Roots"; or an "educational program," such as "Watch Mr. Wizard" and "Lilia's, Yoga and You."

The informal learning that occurs from TV is in all three domains—cognitive, psychomotor, and affective—and can be any content, that is, the content of any of the above "programs." Sample "content" that can be informally learned from TV in these domains is listed below. The list is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive:

*Cognitive* / History, reading, current events, psychology, sociology, careers, science, foreign language, business, and fine arts.

*Psychomotor* / Typing, yoga, gardening, exercises, and painting.

*Affective* / Prejudice/antiprejudice, liking/disliking good, interpersonal relations, liking classical music, and liking science.

Finally, it is critical to note that the overt, informal learning from TV occurs with people of all ages and socioeconomic classes. Anyone can learn informally from a TV program, whether the program was "aimed" at his/her level or not.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR FORMAL LEARNING

For the purposes of this discussion, we make the following assumptions based upon Jean Piaget's developmental learning theory:

1. The learner, like any other organism, constantly adapts to his/her environment;
2. Adaption to the environment occurs through assimilation and accommodation of stimuli encountered; and
3. The individual's adaptability is determined by an interaction of maturation, genetic heredity, socialization, and environmental factors.

The learner discussed in this report is any average American child enrolled in the formal education system from the age of 5 until at least age 17.

### What the Learner Brings

It has been established that 96 percent of the American homes, regardless of socioeconomic group, have at least one television set. (Schrank, 1975, p.99). Thirty-five percent of the homes have two television sets. Therefore, we can assume that television is an integral part of the learner's environment.

We do not attempt to identify those specific

factors related to TV and their influence upon the learner; however, we do assume that commercial TV viewing produces multiple, interrelated influences upon the average learner in today's formal education system. We posit that because of TV's influence, today's learners bring to any formal learning situation certain intellectual skills, values, and information.

*1. Intellectual Skills* / Two intellectual skills which appear to be present in today's learners are receptive visual language skills and receptive and expressive verbal language skills. Even though they may not be able to verbalize what they observe, learners of all ages appear to be able to receive at least the meaning and order of events in a televised message. This is evidenced by young children role-playing the TV characters and stories they experience.

Observation also indicates that verbal language is learned from TV viewing. Very young children exhibit the ability to repeat lyrics and jingles verbatim, and older children use words and phrases overheard on TV in their spontaneous speech.

Children also have demonstrated reading and recognition skills learned via TV. They "read" names of cereals, toys, and various other objects appearing in commercials.

*2. Values* / We recognize that the learner brings with him/her certain values to the formal education setting. It is suggested that these values are a part and parcel of his/her passive experiences with the medium. The values may be positive or negative in terms of their affect upon the child's behavior. For instance, the learner may learn to appreciate music, drama, and dance on one hand, while on the other he/she may become a noncritical consumer of all products whose commercials are appealing to him/her.

*3. Information* / It cannot be denied that the learner brings a veritable mountain of information to the formal learning situation. The learner is barraged with facts concerning other cultures, animals, peoples, roles, and cities, to name a few. This information may play an important role in his/her classroom success.

These examples provide evidence that commercial television can cause learning—some desirable and some dubious, but learning just the same.

**Restructuring Formal Education**

Few would argue that individuals learn informally all the time. In fact, through TV and the other mass media we can learn most of the content presented in the current formal education system. Therefore, it is possible that the formal system could be eliminated with little negative consequence to learning. Wagschal, writing in the August 1978 issue of *The Futurist* suggests that media literacy is replacing the traditional forms taught in today's schools and unless the schools change they will become obsolete.

If the formal education system is to survive, it must recognize that informal learning (television viewing) has effects on the form of formal education; these effects are parallel to the effects of mediated instruction as identified in the *AECT Educational Technology: Definition and Glossary of Terms* (1977).

These effects have definite educational implications in such areas as who determines content; content selection and standardization; quality and quantity of resources; and the who and how of resource design and production, instructional implementation, and student assessment and evaluation of instruction.

*1. Content Determination* / Heinich (1970) suggests that content specialists, instructional developers, and material producers determine the content of courses of instruction. He implies that the decisions could be made at a national level rather than locally. Local curriculum committees and instructors could focus on course selection rather than content determination.

*2. Standardization and Course Choice* / Whereas the content of specific courses would be standardized across the nation, individual institutions would select those courses which best fit their philosophy of education (Heinich, 1970). In addition, course selection could be based upon the community's or target population's needs.

*3. Quality and Quantity* / Initially the quantity of mediated courses may drop because of standardization and content determination; however, the quality would increase because of the increased level of expertise in content specialists, instructional developers, and material producers.

*4. Design of Instruction* / Since courses would then be designed by instructional design specialists, instruction would be designed, developed, and evaluated systematically—thus cancelling the intuitive or time-filling methods of planning which are common to today's schools.

*5. Assessment of Student Learning* / Since any system of instructional design has the construction of assessment instruments built into each course, assessment is an inherent part of instruction. The administration and scoring of assessment instruments can be accomplished by clerks or others; this would free the teacher for other roles.

*6. Role of the Teacher* / The role of the teacher in today's formal education systems could then be changed. Teachers would be gatherers of resources, diagnosticians, and counselors—serving as a resource to provide learners with the experiences they select for learning.

*7. Role of the School System* / Schools could cease to be in existence, thus saving tax dollars now spent for the land, buildings, maintenance, and utilities. These tax dollars could be distributed equally to all those interested in formal learning and learners would be able to spend their tax dollars where they wish.

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# Political Power and Mass Media

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## INTRODUCTION

Central to the issue of mass media and their impact on learning is the problem inherent in human communication—the use of symbols in sharing meanings and experiences. This is a unique feature which separates them from other primates, by virtue of the greater use which they make of it.

Like other living organisms, the objective of humans is to insure survival by being aware of those forces in the environment which promote and/or limit life, but also how to relate more to the former while keeping the latter in check. A feature in human experience which illustrates this point is a tendency to seek information. Accumulation of this information becomes knowledge and the more knowledge a person has access to, the more powerful he/she tends to become.

In human interaction, therefore, the game of survival becomes the game of control of information. The more an individual or group can exercise control over vital information, the more their survival can be guaranteed. In addition, the more he/she prevents others from having access to the same information, the more powerful he/she tends to be.

### Definitions

1. Control, in this discussion, will refer to that aspect of information handling which includes knowledge of the logistics involved in seeking out, packaging, storing, retrieving, and disseminating information.

2. Mass media, in our view, are an approach in information handling which deal with some of the many channels through which information is collected, packaged, stored, retrieved, and disseminated. They are imbued with the following characteristics:
   a. Autocratic in nature, i.e., the flow is always from a few to many.
   b. Have a delayed feedback loop or no feedback at all.
   c. Discourage immediate interpersonal interaction.
   d. Most often it is the privilege of the source who selects it.
   e. Allow little or no verification of basic assumptions of the receiver made by the source.

3. Learning, in this discussion, will be used broadly to refer to the anticipated *change* in perception, attitude, or behavior of the learner, occasioned by exposure to the information. The potential power which the receiver has lies in his/her capacity to initiate messages and select channels, thereby becoming the source.

### *The Model*

The components of the model (adapted from David Berlo's *Process of Communication*) are categorized under the following questions:

1. Who?
   a. The *Source* (originating or controlling the information).
   b. The *Receiver* (target audience at the opposite end of the information flow).
2. What? *Message* or *Information* (their content

and form)

3. Where? When? and How?—*Channel* and logistics of handling the message, i.e., package, store, retrieve, and disseminate.

4. Why? That is, with what *Effect*?
   a. From the source's standpoint: bring about change in receiver's perception, attitude, and behavior.
   b. From the receiver's standpoint: use the learning experience to resist source's manipulation and ensure survival.

The diagram attached shows 2, 3, and 4 as the components of the 'process' and (a) and (b) as the human factors involved in their execution. (See Figure 1) Here are some examples to illustrate the above, with reference to mass media.

Source (1a) may be: television, radio, and film executives and producers; newspaper executives and reporters; advertising agencies; teachers and other school administrators; government representatives; etc.

Receiver (1b) may be: community of listeners and viewers, readers, consumers, school children, voters, etc.

The message (2) may take the form of news reports, instruction, entertainment, sale of products, regulations or legislations, etc.

The channel (3) selected may be TV, radio, film, newspapers, magazines, etc.

Effects (4) anticipated from source's (4a) viewpoint may be to get consumers to buy a product, school children to learn certain skills or behave in a given way, have citizens cooperate with government and obey the laws, etc.; from the receivers' (4b) viewpoint may be to enable them to make a clear assessment of the utilitarian value (in terms of survival) of the information made available, and, probably, to make a better judgment of the intent of the source from this perspective.

**Objective**

The group's objective in selecting this topic is to examine how the model can be restructured to enable the receiver to play the role of source more. After all, effective communication is a function of the frequency at which source and receiver interchange roles in the process of information sharing.

The pursuit of this effort can be observed in each group's approach to the issue raised for this conference. However, our group would examine the "receiver" in the context of:

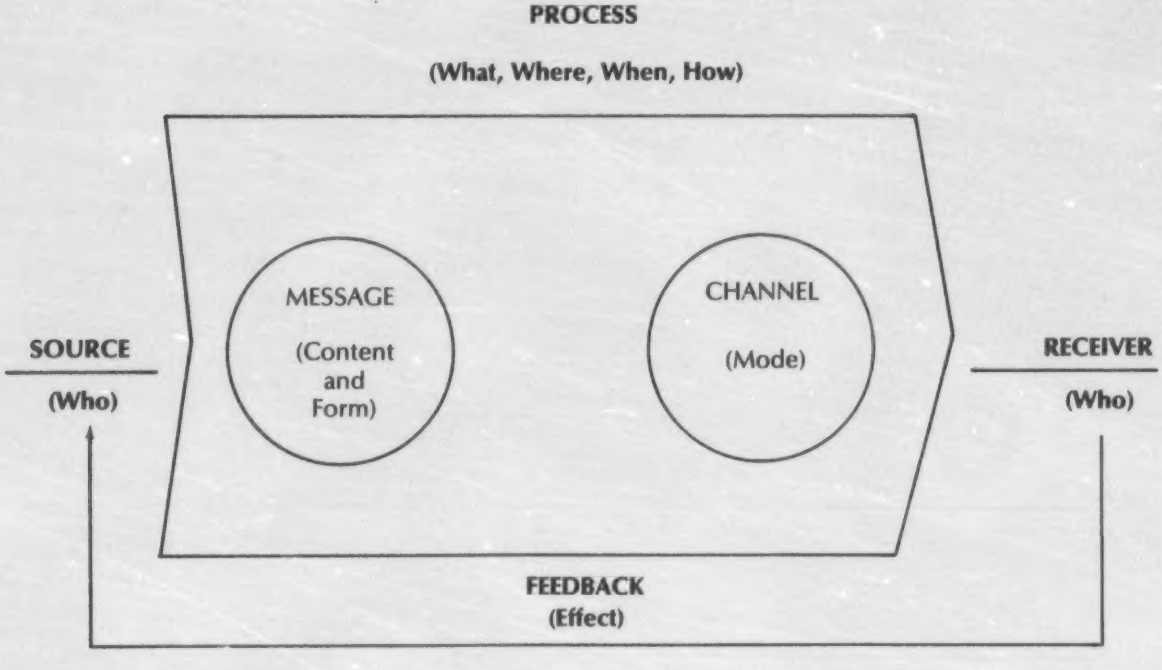


Figure 1

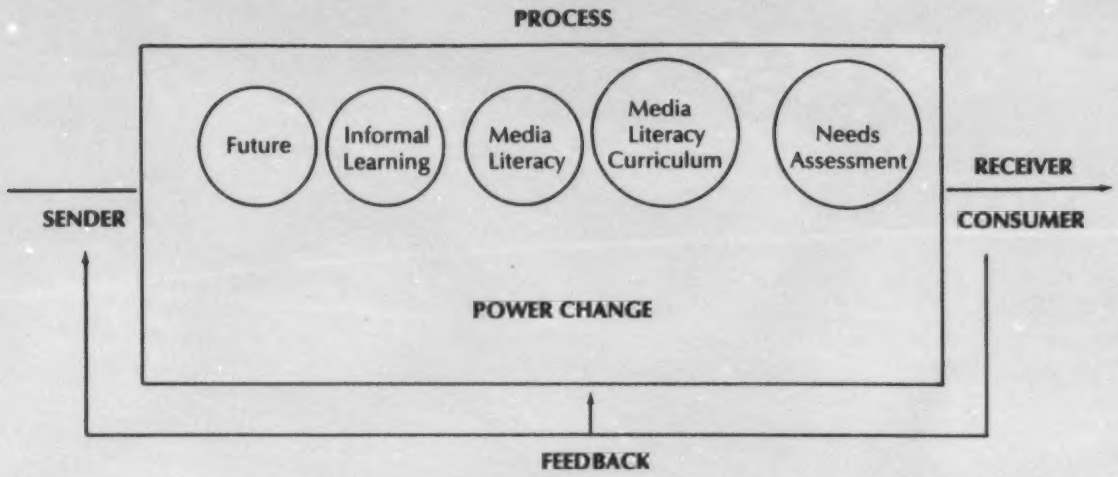


**Figure II**

1. an individual's effort
2. a group's effort at local level
3. a group's effort at state or national level
4. the structure of the society and the political process (see Figure II)

Factors to consider will include the legislative, economic, and socio-psychological. The above outline carries the thesis that mass media per se does not exert powerful influence. It is the message or information carried that makes the difference. The medium becomes the message only in the absence of a "source." Television, film, and magazines are no more a culprit in the crime of miseducation than a gun is guilty of committing murder. In each case, it is the human factor (source and receiver) that makes the difference. What they project are a function of their:

1. socio-cultural values (education upbringing—of which TV may be a part if one considers the extent to which other socializing institutions have abdicated their roles),
2. motivational factors (objectives or goals), and
3. physical and psychological states.

In short, the impact of mass media on learning may be positive, negative, or neutral depending on the agenda set by all those whose interests are affected by the existence of these instruments.

## MASS MEDIA ADVERTISING AND THE CONSUMER

The structure and continuous bombardment of electronic and other media affects learning and influences perception, attitudes, and behavior. The billions of dollars coming from advertising finance the media sources. Thus, advertisers can control the power inherent in the content of mass media.

The advertisers can and do control many aspects of the media being transmitted to the consumer. Since they pay the piper, they call the tune. And they pay the piper well. In 1972 alone, advertisers spent 6.9 billion dollars on newspaper ads; 4.1 billion on television commercials; 1.5 billion on radio commercials; and 1.4 billion on magazine ads. Currently, 60 percent of newspaper material is devoted to ads; over one-half of magazine income is derived from ads; and one-fourth of television and radio broadcasting time is reserved for commercials (which finance the other three-quarters) (Sandman, 1976). In 1978, money and time put into television advertising has even more significance: recent studies show that 96 percent of American homes have at least one TV set and that it is on at least six hours a day. A typical 16-year-old has spent as much or more time in front of the TV set as in school, and within a lifetime the average American will have spent something like 6-8 years in front of the TV set. Women watch more than men and the less educated watch more TV than the more educated (Schranck, 1975, p.9).

Former FCC chairman Nicholas Johnson states that the broadcasting industry has an annual business of 16 billion dollars. It has now attained

the greatest political power ever held. Since broadcast industries are almost totally financed by industry, this can also be called economic or advertiser power. Johnson also points out that "mass media has nothing to do with program content; the broadcasters are in the business of selling you, the audience, to the advertiser. In the process, it affects when and what people eat, when they go to sleep, the process of family socialization, and who is allowed to run for political office."

Emphasis on selling has indeed become so great that program content is only incidental to the mass media operation. In fact, it is not the product buyer but the advertiser who is now considered the consumer in the eyes of mass media managers. The advertiser now actually buys the viewing public at so many dollars per thousand (e.g., viewing women, ages 18-49, were recently worth about $11-$12 per thousand if the buyer's commercials could be run during specified hours of the day). Products advertised often become closely associated with the program or the type of programming they sponsor. That is evidenced by the title "Soap Opera" which originated because those types of afternoon programs were generally sponsored by soap companies to appeal to women listeners or viewers.

According to Johnson, viewers and listeners of electronic media have become extremely passive, allowing themselves to believe that easy, quick solutions occur through some product or some modern, technological form. The advertising process has become so sophisticated that through commercials the consumer now may be (openly or subliminally) exposed to not only numerous products at one time, but to a whole new way of life. Commercials (and even the programs themselves) would have consumers believe that most of their major social, mental, and physical problems can quickly be cured through some easily obtainable product.

The result of such voluminous and expensively produced advertising campaigns not only leaves the consumer with false impressions about products, but greatly increases the cost of the products. For example, an auto company recently sponsored a television special which added $100 to the consumer cost of each automobile it manufactured (Nicholas Johnson).

Mass media advertising, of course, has proven very profitable for the companies using it. There has been great competition for media time and space. This has also meant great interest in the ownership of the money-making mass media companies themselves. According to Johnson, this country's 100 largest industries have now acquired the majority of the most profitable of these media sources.

Advertiser control of programming has been mentioned and should be of great concern to the consumer. Basically, there are four types of advertiser control over mass media content:

1. Through the ads themselves. Nearly half the content of mass media is written by advertisers. Thus, the advertisers have much more control over content than media have over the ads.

2. Connection of the product with the program content. As Johnny Carson tells millions of Americans what to buy, the viewer comes to associate that product with him, to the point that he comes to represent the product itself.

3. By making the company and product look good, never bad. For example, one airline company pays CBS for showing its planes landing in Hawaii on "Hawaii Five-O" because it promotes its flights to that state. However, if an airline crash is to be shown during one of the programs, that contracting airline's planes must not be used.

4. By avoiding controversy at all costs. Advertisers are so concerned about this that they do not want their ads to be shown next to news or presentations that are in any way apt to create controversy; they fear readers or viewers might project the controversy onto their ads too (Sandman, 1976).

Jon Dunn, director of Public Media of the Kentucky Arts Commission, believes that it is our education system itself that has led television to this process of "turning us on economically rather than on to ourselves." He says that we have been taught to do what "they" want—and how to do it with the least effort (easy solutions to difficult problems); it is also education's fault that the emphasis is on media form rather than content.

It is obvious from the "hue and cry" that change is needed. It is also obvious from the discussion above that any effort to bring change in program quality and content should be directed toward the advertisers as well as to the mass media managers. The interest of both mass media managers and industry is profit, which means change in the profit profile is probably needed to change the status quo. However, as educators, we have very little control over the profit margin;

we must explore other avenues to effect change.

## THE POLITICAL PROCESS

There are no more hermits. This is true despite the fact that all can "tune out and turn on" by not reading the newspapers and magazines, or by not observing radio and television, or by not attending movies. By so hiding, all that is managed is to remain poorly informed. Others around us will be making decisions which will affect our lives, sometimes profoundly. Like it or not, all individuals live in a society. By definition, a society is that group of people who have the greatest effect on us. The United States of America will be the society referred to throughout this article.

Every (wo)man's desire is to live within those constraints most pleasing to him/her. The implied ideal for this society is a pure democracy: "What we have, madam, is a republic—if you can keep it" (from Ben Franklin). Democracy allows every individual to feel the opportunity to express himself/herself on every issue requiring group action. Murmuring, body language, and yelling all should help form opinion. With over 220 million people in our society, it is impossible to have a more individualized system than a republic. That allows every elector to have equal say in who will represent him/her in the democratic process.

It can easily be argued that Ben Franklin was correct in saying that this society may not be able to keep this republic. Many factors are at work on democratic process. Pressure groups *not* representative of the whole society have much influence on democracy. In fact, a favorite saying of many is, "We have the best Congress money can buy." Individuals' lives are then directly affected by those who have the purchasing power (money) and most effectively use it to their (not the individual's) ends.

So far power has been discussed without explaining what it is and what are its effects. Power is the ability to move others to achieve given goals.

Political science is based on a study of power. Two statements most often heard from this discipline are, "Power currupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely" and "Nature abhores a (power) vacuum." One cannot exercise control over other individuals without some arbitrary decisions being made. This is true to the level of such corruption as is allowed by those individuals over whom the power is being exercised. When the reins are not tightened, we let the horses take us to their destination. Perhaps this can be controlled by trying to stop anyone from exercising power. However, this is impossible as someone or some group will find a way to use every bit of power left available.

Power is not a negative concept. Ben Franklin endorsed its use and hoped that we could keep its use balanced between action and the individual's welfare. Power is inherently a part of our society, so it will always be used.

Where does that leave the individual? He/she has given up some of his/her own control to the group but wishes to run his/her life as he/she best sees fit. Every person derives power from the value of each person's life, his/her position in the family or greater society, his/her profession, and his/her charisma. Each of these factors are variables and are cumulative.

For the individual to abdicate his/her responsibility is to create a vacuum that some other person and/or group *will* use to exercise more control over that person and his/her fellows in the society.

Every person (plus degree of position, profession, and charisma) offers everybody the power to affect his/her own life and those about him/her. As we all have varying degrees of effectiveness, we have unequal shares of power. However, we *all* possess some power. The inarticulate person who exercises his/her power has more control over his/her life and of those around than does the articulate who fails to use any of his/her power outside of his/her office.

De Tocqueville, when touring America, over 100 years ago, observed that the words democracy and committee were synonomous as there were so many committees in America. This has increased to the point where the committees have become standing committees (organizations) with their own structure of subcommittees. Groups could move (exert power on) this society much more effectively than could most individuals. This is true today with the distinction that subcommittees are formed to exert power on the larger committee and thus the society.

An example could be our own AECT which was formed to help a new profession collectively find itself, join together people of like training and inclination within education, and influence some action (power) on the structures that dispense money and control our concerns in education. A regular structure of committees, divisions, and affiliates has been formed to help AECT know the concerns of its rank and file members and to

ensure that AECT pursues "enough" of these concerns. The politics of how such subgroups are formed and then interact is another aspect of the concept of power that cannot be dealt with in this report due to time constraints.

Organizations have varying degrees of power, much as do individuals, because of differences in their size, position of the profession they represent in society, force of leadership, and the degree of political expertise they possess. An organization without a full-time political advocate's office, for example, will have much less influence on the society than will one that has such a structure.

Another variable deals with one organization's ability to form strong working liaisons with other organizations with similar interests. To be effective in modifying the society, they must both (or all) have effective mechanisms which allow them to agree on joint purposes and strategy, and be able to implement that plan. This may be carried over many issues for a long period of time to become effective. Organizations are like the individuals they represent in that they may find their balance and collectively lose a few major battles before finding a winning combination.

For this to work, the organization(s) must clearly identify to its governance structure and to its members exactly which parts of society it will attempt to modify. If actions are generally directed to the federal government, for example, and the stated purposes are toward affecting local educational bodies, very limited success can be expected with either.

## THE ESSENCE OF LEARNING BY DOING: THE INDIVIDUAL

Control of information *IS* power. Most people acquire information from the mass media, principally from the television medium. There are only a very few people who control the mass media: advertising interests, stations and networks themselves.

With control come certain assumptions. The few assume what the many want to see, what they will watch, how long their attention will hold, and so forth. An example of such an assumption is that concerning "broadcast quality" standards for video programming. The assumption probably evolved in an innocent, perhaps even admirable way. The engineers determined among themselves the standards of quality which they would utilize during production and broadcast. The industry assumes that the public therefore expects such standards. That may be a true assumption, but it was reached without basis. The fact is that there is a difference between what has come to be accepted and what we want or need.

The standards assumption provided above only serves to further control the medium. The few may then prevent the many from entering the system by citing broadcast standards. Such criteria beg the issue. Form has determined the content. The real issue is what do the people want to know about to have access to? Only the people can determine that. Such assumptions determine what we think, how we grow, what we learn, how we relate to one another, how our political system operates.

To regain control of our own learning the public must at the very least have an awareness of how the content of the mass media is produced, allowing the individuals to have direct input into the mass media.

There are several avenues of entry into control of the mass media system. The public can allow the few presently running the system to continue to do so but providing a heightened awareness of the workings of the system to the community members. The public may otherwise take action to alter the course of the media through individual economic or influential actions, which are discussed further in the community action handbook. Change in the structure and order itself may be introduced through legislative and lobbying efforts. Finally, the idea of change may be carried still further by individuals or small groups by actually developing themselves the programming which they want to see.

It has long since been noted (by Dale and others) that experiences are the best form of learning. It is not sufficient merely to talk about, or even look at media. To realize how media limit our view of the world, we must go through the selection process ourselves. To know how much has been left out, we must first know how much could have been put in. All of us then need to have access to the media, to have the opportunity to become makers of the images seen. We can come to understand the media by doing it. Educators have all been taught the theory that learning results not from the media but from the processes of learning.

To some extent this is already being done. Students put out school newspapers or submit copy for a school page in the local paper. Some schools encourage students to use film (either motion or still) to "write" papers (a la Cochran,

Debes, and others), to create animations and so forth.

In the larger community a few cable systems are providing equipment, studio space, editing facilities, and training to anyone wishing to produce their own tape for airing on the public access channel. For example, the parks department and CETA program in Dubuque, Iowa, offers classes in portapack use. Anyone in the community who can demonstrate the ability to use the equipment is issued an access card, entitling him/her to check out equipment and use editing facilities at any time. Finished tapes are then aired on the cable access channel. Tapes which have already been aired include such things as neighborhood history, dialog between school officials and students with the community at large, and coverage of local plays, concerts, and conventions.

In Philadelphia, members of the black community gained access to their local commercial station after pointing out that little or no black programming appeared. The station taught groups of children how to use the equipment, then aired their finished tapes. The arrangement proved to be so successful that it continued for five years.

The types of things that may be done are innumerable and provide for many types of learning at the same time. The point is that no matter what the content, the process of producing the product will enable the learner to understand how media messages get put together, and this new knowledge will enable them to exercise some degree of control over the power of media in their lives. If their messages are aired, then that control is extended.

## INFLUENCE OF POWER THROUGH ORGANIZATIONS

Citizens with a concern of a local nature (local community or multiple local communities) should utilize organizations within the concerned area (see the Community Action Handbook). The process of the utilization of organizational power to effect change is, however, basically the same whether on a local or national level. This section will utilize AECT as an example of the process of utilization of organizational power to influence the decisions of others.

In view of the impact of mass media on students, society, and our profession, it is within the perspectives of AECT to consider current movements that will influence the control of mass media. Groups within the 1978 Okoboji Leadership Conference voiced concern over the impact of mass media on the values and attitudes toward and within education. This concern is exacerbated by the findings that mass media (radio and TV in particular) are dominated by the economics of merchandising of consumer goods. The dominance of this concern affects the form and content of mass media.

AECT is an organization of persons with like interests encompassing a loosely defined profession. Therefore, the organization has two kinds of power—that of a group, and that of professional status.

An organization as a system functions in order to continue to exist. In that light, it is the function of the organization to respond to the needs of its membership. Individuals within the organization have the right and power to initiate action, although no right to dictate the eventual outcome.

The Power and Control group believes that one aspect of leadership is the ability to utilize this organizational power in response to membership needs. It is imperative that the membership of a democratic organization be informed of and confident in the use of the organizational structure to influence professional issues.

Within AECT an individual or group may initiate consideration of an issue by the organization. The entry point for such a request will vary with each situation and may be at any level of the organization. (See Figure III). Requests for deliberation are delivered and acted upon by a subcommittee of the board. Action recommendations are sent back to the Board of Directors. The board must then act on the subcommittee recommendation. Any positive action requires the board to enact a political process. With a decision for a stand, further action may occur in the form of affiliation with other organizations holding similar or compatible points of view. As the size of the group advocating any position increases, impact also increases (See Figure IV).

Rather than just balking about the use of organizational power, this study group has decided to actually attempt to implement a process of utilization of organizational power to influence a professional issue.

Due to the impact of mass media on the membership of AECT, particularly those present at the 1978 Okoboji Leadership Conference, and due to the importance of and demonstrated lack

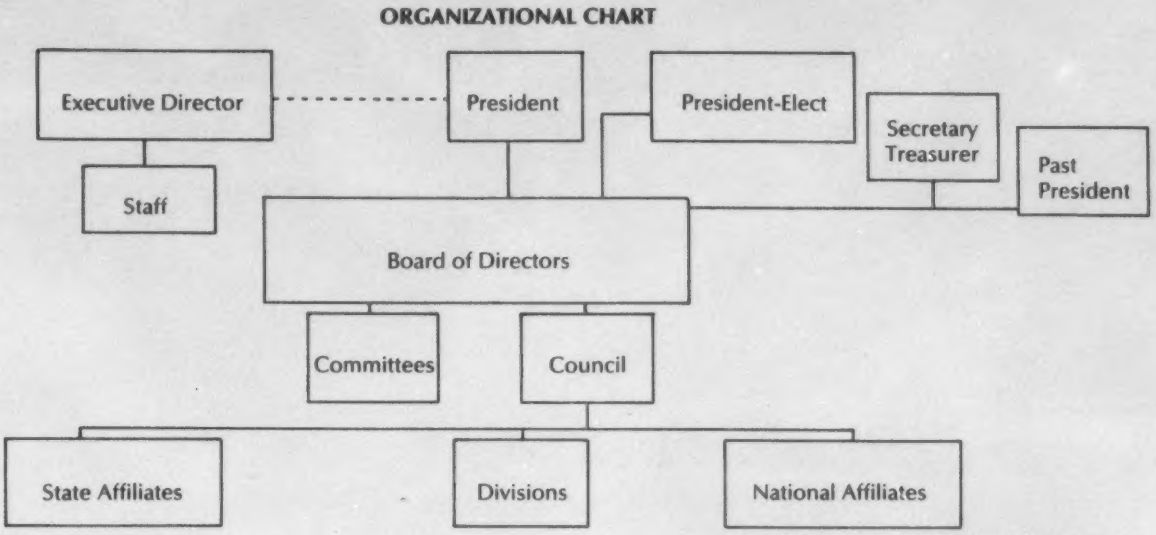


**Figure III**

**Adapted from AECT Policy Handbook**

of knowledge about the proposed legislation changes (i.e., H.R. 13015), this group submits the following as a request to the Board of Directors of AECT. This is submitted at the 1978 Okoboji Leadership Conference in order to (1) implement the request with wide professional support, and (2) use the process of submission and follow-through as a learning experience in utilization of organizational channels. The letter to the AECT Board of Directors is hereby submitted to the delegates of this conference for endorsement.

To: AECT Board of Directors
From: The Power and Control Committee, Okoboji Leadership Conference

The theme of the Okoboji Conference of 1978 was the effect of mass media on learning.

As the conference is attended by educators concerned with educational technology, it recognizes many ways in which the mass media affect the values, information, and skills of our students and the community. We believe that the time spent with mass media affects the educational patterns in our country. Much of the impact of the mass media upon our society in general, and education in particular, is a function of the distribution of control of television and radio, which is legally defined in the Communications Act of 1934.

The House Communications Subcommittee of the U.S. Congress is now considering the first major rewrite of this law during the past 50 years. (The broadcasting sections of the 1934 act were first enacted in 1927.) This 1934 Act provides that broadcasters are public trustees, using public property for limited three-year terms. The broadcasters must present all sides of controversial issues, survey the needs of their community, give all candidates for office an opportunity to be heard, comply with FCC regulations regarding employment of minorities and women, consider the special programming needs of children, and provide locally originated programming.

The proposed act, H.R. 13015, would affect the licensing regulations, program control, and funding and structure of the regulating agency.

In view of the impact of the mass media on education in general and on media educators in particular, the conference asks that AECT Board of Directors actively inform the membership of the consideration of the bill H.R. 13015 by Congress. We urge the Board of Directors to actively assist the membership in obtaining accurate accounts of the issues surrounding this bill in such manner and within such time as to take effective action on this proposed legislation.

Where does this outline on civics leave this Okoboji Conference? Precisely at the point of the individual who has to determine if he/she should let society control him/her or if he/she should have more say on what the society does to/for him/her and his/her fellows. AECT has planned for legislative action but now must determine what level of political influence (power) it wishes to wield. Power is the same game for all. It is up to the individual and his/her organization(s) to learn to play the game effectively.

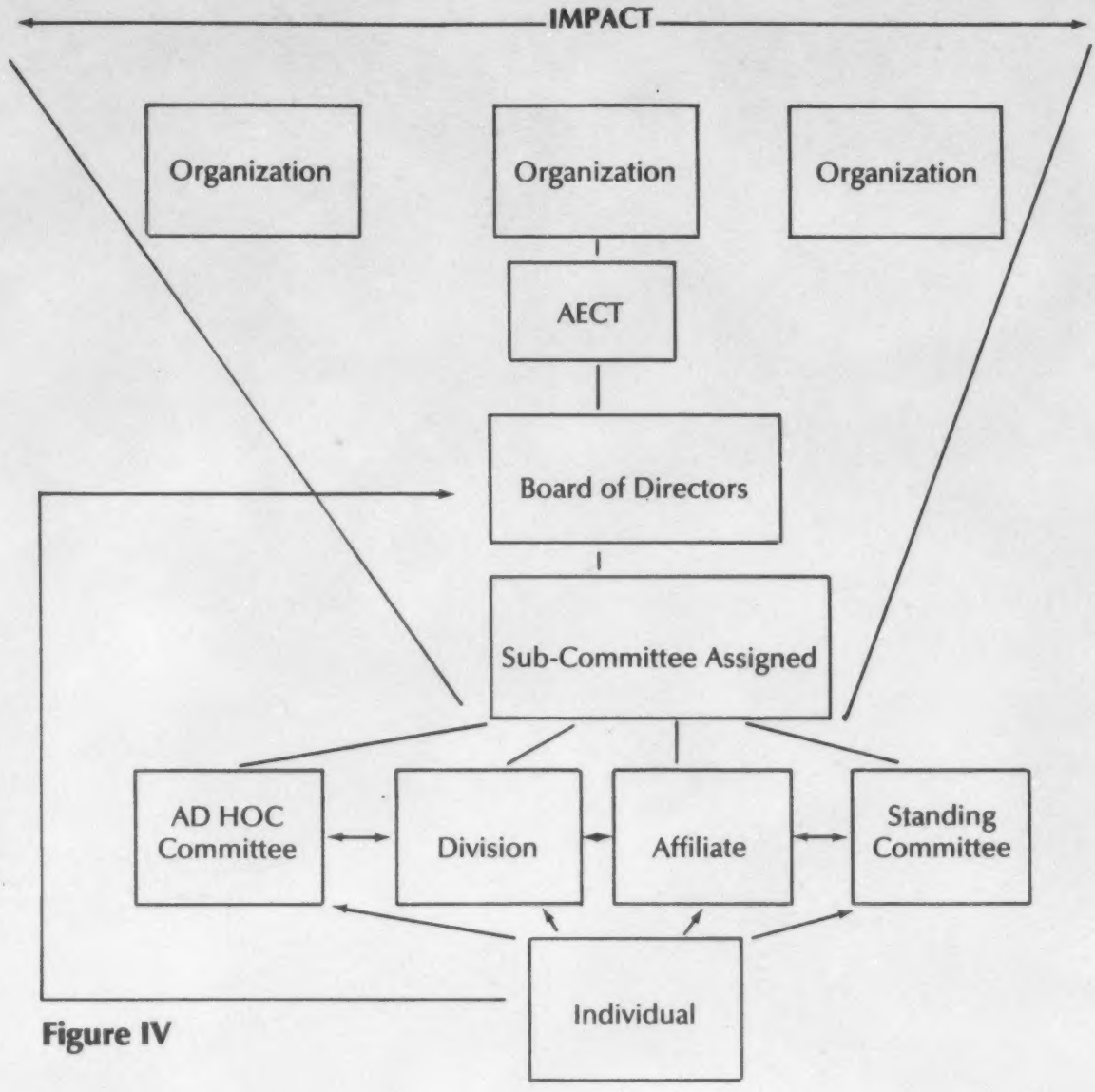


**Figure IV**

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# Guidelines for Community Action

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The viewing, listening, and reading public has underestimated its own power. The working papers presented here are an attempt to present information and stimulate concerned individuals and groups in order to make them aware of their powers and how to use them.

Our purpose is to attempt a change where needed, and to reinforce those areas of the mass media which are a benefit to society.

We have produced a videotape and a first draft of a potential handbook which we hope will be useful in providing information to concerned citizens. We have focused on the areas of television, radio, cable television, newspaper, magazines, and films.

**PREFACE**

This country with its institutions belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the exisiting government they can execute their constitutional right of amending it. *Abraham Lincoln*

Just as government, education, the church, and businesses are institutions, so are the mass media. They are a public institution. Citizens seem to forget this particularly in the case of television because it is run as a private business for profit. In actuality, television stations are only permitted by law to use the airwaves for limited periods of time and for the public interest. So Abraham Lincoln is correct. And he is correct in stating that whenever we have complaints or are "weary" of the existing state of affairs, we have a right, even a responsibility, if we are to keep that freedom to change the order of things. Few can deny there are public concerns about news coverage in all media—the depiction of violence and the "low level" of network programming. Newspapers today report less "bad news" and more about lifestyle.

There are good things happening in the mass media, also. Public television is an improvement over commercial television despite its flaws. Radio is experiencing a renaissance in diversity of FM programming. But critical reaction to problems and achievements of mass media are too often nonexistent. Partly this is because of the imposing size and complexity of mass media. People feel powerless to effect change. But the listening, viewing, and reading public underestimates its power. When united together in organizations which exert their influence in accepted fashion, new possibilities open for educators, church members, and citizens to effect change in meaningful ways.

Community action to make the mass media more responsive to the needs of the consumer begins with the concern for the individual. That concern may be generated through a felt need to effect positive change in news coverage, programming, or commercial advertising. However, it is unlikely that the efforts of one concerned individual will be effective, unless that individual joins his/her efforts with others. Thus, it is through established community organizations and coalitions of community organizations that change will be likely to occur.

If citizens want to see their concerns dealt with, the following thoughts will enhance their

effectiveness and credibility:

1. Be aware of mass media's effects on people; be informed.
2. Praise good programming practices. This establishes good relations with managers of mass media organizations.
3. Be aware of constraints and problems which might restrain the manager from effecting change.
4. Guard against a sense of failure. Do not expect quick and easy change.
5. Identify targets and establish some goals that might be achieved in a shorter period of time. Successes reinforce the group's efforts.

## TELEVISION AND RADIO

### Introduction

It is generally perceived that the broadcast field is so large that the common person has no say in or control of how a station runs or what is sent over the airwaves to our homes. We must remember that the airwaves belong to the public and that the broadcasters have the responsibility to live up to the commitments they make. One can question if these commitments go far enough.

The concerns expressed here are ones generally heard all over the country. Most of these deal with network programming content. Broadcast management people often use the excuse that they do not have control over the networks. This is a misleading statement. Licenses are granted to the stations and not the networks. Stations have a significant control over what is being aired. Barring contractual agreements that stations have as a network affiliate, there is ample opportunity to select programs that are not littered with sex and violence.

What can local communities do about the program content? It is said that television viewers have the freedom of choice, better known as the "on/off" button. This, however, is not the right answer.

We will make an attempt to identify basic concerns with broadcasting that we are all familiar with, offer positive steps that a community group can take to bring about change, and describe, as a last resort, what legal means are at the disposal of the public with regard to license granting.

### Areas of Public Concern

Research has shown these to be common concerns expressed by the public.

1. Serials, particularly soap operas, stereotype male and female roles.
2. Youth are offered few desirable role models to emulate.
3. There is little opportunity to discriminate between real- life situations and similar situations portrayed on television.
4. Psychological problems have become standard themes.
5. Soap operas and advertising impart the message that any problem can be solved.
6. News reports do not always reflect both sides of an issue.
7. News media tend to overplay the more violent and sensational aspects of a story.
8. There is only token representation of minorities in programming.
9. Often there is inadequate coverage of public affairs activities at the local level.
10. The explicit presentation of violence and sex in programming is greatly misrepresentative of the life of the American public.

### Constructive Strategies for Involving the Community

With concerns like this in mind, community action groups often seek to change a station's programming policies. One will concede that local protest of network programming often falls on deaf ears. Many stations refuse to alter or drop network programming because of the lost revenue from advertising. This should not deter groups from voicing their opinions, however.

There are several effective means that individuals or groups can use in getting their views aired. It is to the mutual benefit of both the community and the broadcaster to work together to foster the development of common goals.

*Persuasive Strategies*

*1. Guest Shots on Programs* / Guest shots are an important way to get your message out to the public. Use well informed people from your organization as your spokespersons. Both broadcaster and the organization benefit from appearances of this kind. It will serve to focus the audience upon your issue and help the broadcaster meet his/her programming commitments.

*2. News Exposure* / Another way of getting your message to the public is through the news show. You must be careful that you give the station something that is newsworthy. It is also helpful to learn something about the news business, i.e., the kind of issues and people that will be

acceptable to the audience, production deadlines, and technical considerations. You may also want to take advantage of audiovisual materials to help you get your point across.

*3. Public Service Announcements* / PSAs are another excellent means of disseminating your message. Broadcast stations as a matter of course will run a number of these free announcements. The better job you do in preparation, the more likely they are apt to be used. They should be able to stand up against the quality found in regular commercials. You have no legal right to demand their use. The station is bound, however, to run the number of public service announcements as promised in their renewal application.

*4. Editorial Policy* / The editorial policy can also be found in the public file. You may find that the station policy permits those offering opposing views equal time to respond to station editorials. These policies vary greatly from station to station.

*5. Correspondence* / By law your local station must keep in the public file any letter received from the public. This fact alone makes individual letters important. You may have a significant influence, either positive or negative, by taking time to write to the media. After you have viewed a particular program you found favorable, it would be to your advantage to notify the station of your reaction. Often one positive letter can do more to promote your ideals than negative letters. However, a station cannot tolerate large numbers of negative letters without reacting in some way, particularly if the public file is brought to the attention of the regulatory agency. Another area where the single letter or group of letters from the public can have a significant influence is in dealing directly with commercial sponsors. You may choose to direct your letters to the sponsor rather than to the broadcaster. The effect is obvious. The sponsor becomes caught in the controversy and may choose to direct the broadcaster to change the program content or face the possible withdrawal of financial support to the media.

*6. Monitoring Groups* / You may wish to organize local monitoring groups. The very presence of this type of group, in itself, may well influence what kind of program material is offered to the community. The National Parent Teachers Council Association has made the organization of such local groups a focus this year. These groups will provide feedback to the local media and thus facilitate change, or at least increase the awareness within a monitoring group of the kind of programs children in the community are seeing and hearing.

*Strategies for Legal Change*

One would hope that legal proceedings against the license holder would be the last step in achieving change. However, should legal procedures become necessary, the following are recommended.

*1. Visit the Management* / Open and direct discussion is one of the best means to facilitate change or reinforce current practices of your station. Meet the management of the station and discuss your concerns. Try to arrive at an acceptable solution that both you and the station can live with. One visit might not be enough. Don't give up this option unless there are sure signs that it will be fruitless. If meaningful discussions with station management can not bring about desired action, your next steps may require extensive investigation on your part for potential legal action, or you may wish to pursue alternative steps that will eventually bring about the position you seek.

*2. Public Files* / Probably the most important source of information a group can get ready access to is the public files of the station. What is a public file? Every licensee is required to retain, on file, certain documents related to station activities. This file will contain such things as the current station license and renewal applications, acertainment data, ownership statements, financial statements, employment reports, and mail from the public. Careful examination of the public file can provide the necessary background information for challenging a license renewal.

There are two legal avenues that a group may wish to explore in actually challenging a station's license. These actions are usually extensive proceedings which involve expert legal advice, and money. However, there are consumer groups that will assist persons who wish to take this direction. These two procedures are:

*1. License Renewal Challenge* / This in effect says to the FCC that the current holder of the license in your community is not living up to the commitments that it proposed to meet when it was granted the license. Having not lived up to these commitments, you state that your organization can do a better job as the licensee and, therefore, you should be given the license to operate the station in your community. Be prepared to prove you can provide a better service and live up to the commitments you purpose.

2. *Petition to Deny* / Filing a Petition to Deny tells the FCC that the station is doing a poor job and you would rather not have it in your community. A Petition to Deny does not necessarily provide for a replacement station and may result in your community losing its assigned frequency.

In preparing a challenge as described above, a group can look at certain documents in the public file whose impropriety could result in formulating a plan of action. A brief description of what should be found in the files is as follows:

a. License. This document contains administrative, technical, and financial data required by the FCC. It gives programming data that a station states it will meet. This is the most important document in the public file.

b. Ascertainment Statement. This document, filed each year, attempts to outline those problems, needs, and concerns expressed by the community served. Proper investigation of the ascertainment statement will show if the station has met the criteria required.

c. Ownership Statement. This identifies the principle owners of the station. You might look for conflict of interest in this area.

d. Employment Statement. This cites the equal employment statement that the station proposes to follow. Check to see if this criteria has been met.

e. Financial Statement. This gives a brief description of the proposed financial backing of the station. Check to see if what is stated is feasible.

f. Letters from the Public. All correspondence from the public regarding station operations and programming should be on file. Check to see if the station is listening to these concerns and is taking proper steps to meet these concerns.

g. Fairness Doctrine. One area that is not necessarily documented in the public file but is of extreme importance is that of the Fairness Doctrine. This doctrine requires broadcasters to deal with controversial issues of public importance. A group might look to see if, in fact, these issues are being dealt with and if both sides of the picture are being presented.

## COMMUNITY ACTION FOR CABLE TV

### Introduction

Cable television (CATV) had its beginning as a community action program to construct TV antennas and towers which would be capable of receiving distant signals previously blocked or distorted by terrain and distance. Cable TV or CATV offers high- quality reception of "off air" or broadcast television (ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS, and independent). Cable television can bring into the home a wide range of community services including surveillance, computers, shopping, education, and many others.

### Areas of Public Concern

Each community will want to address itself to many areas before a franchise for cable television is established or renewed.

*Cable Installation*

1. Consideration of what homes or sections of the community will be served, and the cost of that installation once service area is determined should be made.

2. Before installation of cables in public buildings— including police, fire, hospital, nursing homes, court houses, clinics, libraries, schools, social services, and street surveillance—careful consideration should be given to the health, safety, the political process, arts and recreation, and educational needs of the community.

*Management*

1. Adequate repair and complaint procedures should be established.

*Origination*

1. A survey of local production possibilities in the community schools and/or businesses needs to be completed and the interlinks of these facilities to the cable system considered.

2. Channel space and time for community, educational, and other programming must be considered.

3. Public TV production facilities which can be used by the community at large is also a necessary step in cable franchising.

4. Commercial time over the cable must be considered.

*Future Technologies*

1. Provisions for two-way cable installation must be made so that future technologies requiring two-way communications are possibilities.

2. Satellite links with cable stations and interlinks between cable installations need to be looked at not only from the technology standpoint but also in respect to future programming possibilities.

### Constructive Strategies for Involving Communities

*Persuasive Strategies*

Individuals who wish to influence the future of cable in their community will find it to their advantage and that of the community to:

1. Enlist the support of community groups and resources.
2. Inform the community as to the advantages of establishing a community-owned cable television system.
3. Develop personal rapport with existing or proposed cable operators through community cooperation.

*Strategies with Legal Backing*

Since the early days of community cable, a multimillion dollar powerful industry has emerged. As this business has grown, various forms of government regulations have been instituted in the community interest. The regulations come from the local, state, and federal authorities.

*Federal* / The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has become increasingly active in cable regulations. The regulations which come from the FCC, however, deal primarily with large city installations. The FCC regulations which a community should be aware of in cable franchise negotiations include the following:

1. The cable system must carry all commercial and educational signals within which the community receives a grade B signal strength or better.
2. Cable systems with more than 3,500 subscribers must provide local production and origination facilities to the community.
3. The cable concern must be owned and operated by a community or business not owned by an existing network station (ABC, CBS, NBC).

*State* / State regulations are usually under the auspices of the Public Utilities Commission or another state agency, depending on the state's definition of cable TV. Information regarding the state governing agency can usually be obtained by contacting the state capitol. These regulations rarely set strict criteria for cable TV installation.

*Local* / Local regulations and franchise granting is a function of the local government. Should a community or business wish to begin a cable system or renew an existing franchise, it is the local government which must be approached. It is the community's duty to discuss, establish, and meet criteria which are amenable to all concerned with the local governing body.

## NEWSPAPERS

### Introduction

The newspaper is committed by tradition and conception to unbiased reporting of the news. Newspapers are protected by the First Amendment to insure that information will not be suppressed, altered, or controlled by political leaders. Unfortunately, newspaper ownership has become increasingly concentrated in a limited number of persons and company chains. This has resulted in a significant decrease in the number of newspapers which compete for the same audience. In 1880, 61 percent of all newspapers had competition. In 1975, only 3 percent had more than one newspaper in a given market area.

Such a concentration of ownership and a decreased competitive market could affect the quality of news and the variety of opinions being expressed. In extreme circumstances the people would lose the freedom of the press without censorship or government restrictions.

In all fairness to newspaper publishing, it is expensive to provide in-depth reporting of local events. Advertising revenues are needed to meet expenses. Space is limited and time is critical. Advertisments can be prepared ahead of publication deadlines so that current news items can be prepared as close to the printing deadline as possible. The need to fill news space in the newspaper can be met by use of articles from wire services, syndicated features, and regular features such as the stock market report. Such a system fills the newspaper and provides general news information to the reader, but leaves only 3 percent of the newspaper for local coverage. The combination of decreased competition and readily available general news items tends to produce newspapers which are less and less responsive to community needs and concerns.

### Areas of Public Concern

While broadcast services are controlled by federal regulations and licenses, newspapers have no such regulations. It is truly the obligation of the public to monitor newspapers and insure that news is being reported accurately. The following are areas which should be monitored.

1. Are areas of local controversy avoided?
2. Are local news items pursued so that all facets of an issue or activities are made available?
3. How much space is devoted to local news? How much space is devoted to wire service and

syndicated items?

4. Are biases apparent in the news items? The newspaper has an unwritten obligation to present the facts.

5. Are a variety of opinions reported on the editorial page? Is a particular bias apparent? There should also be a fair sampling of the mail received.

6. Are news releases from business and government agencies always printed in such a way that a favorable impression is given?

7. Are loaded headlines used for articles which deal with a particular issue or viewpoint?

8. What percentage of the newspaper is devoted to pseudoevents? These are events such as picket lines and tree plantings which are designed to draw attention to specific issues or groups. The events are continued for the news.

9. Is advertising misleading?

10. If a local newspaper and television are jointly owned, are these media forms being used to benefit the owner rather than the people?

**Activities**

The following are suggested activities which can be used to analyze the practices of your newspaper.

1. Find out who owns the local newspapers. What other communications businesses do the owners run?

2. Who are the editors at your local newspapers?

3. What percentage of your local papers is advertising? Compare your findings with the national average which is 60 percent.

4. After examining many editions of your local paper, decide which local advertisers pay the most money for advertising.

5. Does your local newspaper use the wire service? What is the percentage of wire service material used?

6. What kind of subject matter and viewpoint from the syndicated columnists is available in your newspaper? Is there a variety of syndicated columnists in your local newspaper or does it favor those with a particular viewpoint?

7. Have individuals evaluate various sections and departments in the newspaper. Determine whether much of the material is "puffery"—press release material praising certain products or companies.

8. Does your newspaper's editorial page express a consistent viewpoint? Does it discuss important local and national issues?

9. Are letters to the editor printed in your newspaper? If so, do the opinions expressed represent a cross section or do they always agree with the editor?

10. Talk to adults who have been reading a certain newspaper for many years. Ask if they have found any bias. If so, do they object to it? Decide if you think newspapers should try to be objective in reporting the news coverage.

**Constructive Strategies for Involving the Community**

*Persuasive Strategies*

*To Support You* / You can use the newspaper format to lend support to your ideas and concerns.

1. Contribute to the editorial page either with a letter to the editor or with a prewritten editorial on an issue. Often editorials are used if they are well prepared and presented.

2. Send press releases to the newspaper. The more polished the release is, the better chance it has of being used in the newspaper.

3. Contribute a public relations item to the newspaper. These are short articles on a specific subject. Choose a subject which is related to your area of concern and which reflects well on your group. For example, a short article on how to critically watch a movie, while not directly addressing your group, reflects well on your profession. Small newspapers without large staffs often use these "as is."

4. Contact your local news syndication or wire service to see if they will carry your public relations article. This makes wider coverage possible.

5. Find out what specific requirements the newspaper needs— date, contact person, etc.—and what kind of lead time is requested for news items. Learn who the editor is and contact him/her directly. Establish a personal relationship with the editor or local columnist.

*To Effect Change* / There are a few strategies you can use if you feel a practice of the newspaper is not serving the public interest, or if you would prefer a different emphasis than is presently used.

1. Singly or as a group write a letter to the editor and explain your concern.

2. Contact the newspaper advertisers and tell them of your displeasure. Often one or two advertisers contribute more than 50 percent of the advertising in the newspaper.

3. Try to gain support for your idea from citizens groups which are already active, such as P.T.A., Council of Churches, or unions. These can be effective voices which editors will listen to.

4. Take out an ad in the newspaper. The paper may not accept the ad, but you can try.

*Strategies with Legal Backing* / As previously stated there are no rules or regulations covering the activities of newspapers: therefore, there are few areas where legal backing can be used.

1. If a local newspaper and television station are jointly owned and these news media are being used to benefit the owner, you can contact the FCC or the Justice Department and lodge an official complaint. This is a serious offense and will be investigated.

2. Beyond the above offense, newspapers are not regulated. If an owner or editor continues to be unresponsive, local political pressure will need to be used. This will require well organized coalitions of several powerful and respected groups, including those who advertise in the newspaper.

## MAGAZINES AND MOVIES

Magazines and movies shown in local theaters are commercial, profit-making ventures. The courts have upheld this view. They are not trustees of public information. Most magazines are very specialized, e.g., *Hot Rod* and *Scientific American*, and serve a very specialized and limited audience.

If you are displeased with the content or form of a magazine, you can write a letter to the editor, or to the advertisers, and let them know of your concerns. Ultimately, you can refuse to purchase the magazine. There are other sources of news.

If you are displeased with local movie theater fare, letters to the owner or advertisers (if there are any) can be effective. When issues involve pornographic films, group pressure can be put on local community leaders and government officials. A few states have a Board of Censors and can provide information on specific procedures. You can research state and local laws which address the issue of pornographic films and direct your concerns to the agency in charge.

## VIDEO SCRIPT

### Introduction

"A Seven Minute Run" or "Have You Made Your Contribution Lately?" is a survey of media shorts to illustrate the effect of mass media on our lives. It proposes to the viewer that we all have a problem and exposes some "wrong ways" to expose mass media intrusion.

### Media Shorts

1. "Homework." A father's grief is expressed over the intrusion of mass media into his home; he is despaired at the barrage of mass media on his children.

2. "A Broadcaster Speaks." The radio and television airways are public domain and concerns over the use of these airways are expressed by the broadcaster.

3. "7 Minute Runs." A national medical association member endorses television and commends television for inducing bowel breaks for ardent TV viewers.

4. "Action Auction." Networks and advertisers routinely discuss and auction viewer bodies in return for business bucks.

5. "The Union Picket." Efforts are made by viewer pickets to improve their exploitation by network auctioneers.

6. "I Want to Shake Your Hand." Political power which is held by the mass media reaches realistic proportions when the candidate physically reaches out to his audience from the television.

7. "Family Hour." Our lives are so completely shaped by mass media that future visions reveal an example of the power of television over our lives when time is allotted for family intercommunication.

8. "Bias Straightener." A dream invention to remove bias from television has a dramatic affect when the announcer freezes as the bias straightener is turned on.

9. "Storm the Hill." Mass media vigilante realizes that the real power in the world today is not in guerilla warfare but in mass media control.

10. "Parental Censorship." A father finds that after he censors mass media in his home he has only remnants of printed materials and finally despairs by smashing the television.

11. "Revolution can be Beautiful." A father seeks to remedy the problem of mass media into his home by sealing up the home with lead paint.

12. "About Local Origination." A broadcaster expresses the need for the public to become involved with local mass media.

13. "Citizen TV." A community television station goes off the air after local equipment is not returned by the last user and the tower is knocked over.

14. "A Commercial We All Need." Finding out about our mass media is the subject of a commercial for our handbook called "Camel" and renamed "Manual Explaining Relevant Communications Needs."

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# Mass Media . . . Education 2000

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## INTRODUCTION

Ashby once said that education is like rotten fish, nobody likes to handle it because it smells, so we pass it on as quickly as possible to others.

As individuals, especially as individuals who are involved in education, we are very much aware of the fact that we have to think about tomorrow, but it is easier to stick to today. Tomorrow will have to wait. It is, in a way, like running from the facts because society is changing in political, economical, and socio-cultural ways without a response from education. The situation now requires a reaction from the educational system and educators.

This requirement for action is unprecedented, both in its scope and immediacy. There has never been such rapid change in society; but even more significantly, there have never been many changes in education. We teach today in much the same way as did Aristotle, Plato, and even the Sumerians in 2000 B.C., oblivious to the fact that the world outside the educational islands has changed.

Many noted authorities such as Kahn and Polak are involved in forecasting future trends. And in a less formal way we have been confronted with predictions for the future from writers like Verne and Asimov. But what are we going to do with these predictions? Are these predictions reliable? In 1900 it was forecast that the number of horse carriages in Paris—at that time almost 1,000—would grow to more than 100,000 by 1950 if certain trends were to continue. But the automobile came and now there are more than 1,000,000 autos in Paris, and probably fewer than 1,000 carriages.

One must be especially careful about forecasting the educational future. In an interview in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1912, Thomas Edison indicated:

> Books will be condemned to the dungeons. We will use films to teach children the connection between works and images. Simply spelling the word CAT is not enough. Showing an image of a cat going with the word CAT, however, will store it up almost forever in the minds of children.

The writers of this report tried to cope with the educational future regarding the mass media by addressing the question, "In what format should education exist in the year 2000, with regard to the impact of mass media and the trends which are evolving in the political, economical, socio-cultural, and educational elements of society?" The group responsible for this part of the report, Mass Media: Its Impact on Learning, wants to point out that talking about education and the mass media is mostly like talking about the weather—everybody complains about it but nobody does anything about it. The group wishes to emphasize that we did not react to a plan, but acted to devise a plan for an educational system which might satisfy the needs and desires of the individual in the year 2000.

This report points out the current trends that have become realities in our lives. It also underlines the capabilities of selected technologies such as two-way communication, satellites, and computerization. Further, it also contains an explanation of the learner capabilities, programs and practices, and learning facilities that will be required in the year 2000.

Although this report also contains a summary, we do not recommend that you, the reader, look only at

the summary. You should go through the entire report because you and your children will live through all of it in the future.

In a program called "Education in the Future," broadcast by CBC (The Canadian Broadcasting Company), one of the panelists said that his three-year-old son was standing in front of the porch doors on a winter day with his little nose pressed against the window looking at a squirrel playing in the snow. After about five minutes the little boy tried to turn the knob on the door. When his father asked if he wanted to go outside, his mother answered, "Oh no, he only wants to tune to another program."

We hope that our educational system will improve and hope it will be worked out before it has outworked us.

**TRENDS**

*Global Home* / McLuhan aptly describes his concept of the world as a "global village." In this respect, using the learner- individual as the focal point of incoming messages, it seems likely that the home has become a global media center with the individual and/or the family at its nucleus. In terms of the mass media, the center of the model below is the individual/family. Surrounding that center are the mass media, constantly changing, constantly transmitting messages or information to that "global home."

Certain trends within the influence of the media can also be identified. They are: political, economic, socio-cultural, and educational trends. These categories can be further divided into specific areas that represent mass media influence.

**Political Trends**

*FCC/Lobbies/Satellite Diplomocy* / Not only is the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) the regulatory body of a great many forms of media, it is also politically active and is influenced by other trends within the political structure. In essence, mass media determines decisions made by the FCC just as it influences the groups lobbying in favor of or against rules and regulations which favor the producers of mass media.

Due to the developments in electronic technology, nations have become more immediately aware of the diplomatic situations of other countries. National leaders react quickly to changing international policies which effect everything from oil prices to individual freedoms.

**Economic Trends**

*1. Less Expensive Technology* / As technology is becoming less expensive, more people are using it in the home. The global home can own relatively inexpensive media which are easy to store, carry, and use.

*2. Employment Market* / This area includes unemployment, underemployment and changing careers, all of which have created more leisure time in which to absorb media and a need for further education.

*3. Commercialization* / Public funds are now being spent to package messages by groups, like the one headed by Ralph Nader, concerned with the need for caution in accepting, on face value, message packaging.

*4. Changing Physical Resources* / There are fewer natural resources and these shortages are causing changing lifestyles. Some countries are even using mass media to discourage consumer use of mass media (e.g., using TV to encourage the global home not to waste energy by using the television).

**Socio-Cultural Trends**

*1. Community Action* / Community groups make use of the mass media to inform/influence other individuals.

*2. Demographic* / Numbers of people, family size, average age, career relocation based on technological advances, and recreational activities, are all based upon information supplied through the media. An example is the massive availability of information about where to live or go in order to satisfy lifestyle requirements.

*3. Changing Values* / The individual's values are changing based upon information received about other lifestyles.

*4. Interpersonal Communication* / Based upon rapid information transmission, the ways in which individuals relate to each other are changing. Mass media have made people rethink and revise basic communication formats between individuals. There is less face-to-face, person-to-person communication. (e.g., the telephone has brought about a decline in home visits)

*5. Multiethnic and Subcultures* / Individuals are receiving stereotyped information about the way diverse ethnic groups live.

**Educational Trends**

*1. Open/Lifelong Education* / Based upon spatial and time limitations, there are a greater number of people with different needs. Hence, a need has been realized for continuing education programs in different media formats, for example, telephone

educational programs and educational TV.

2. *From Teacher-Goal-Oriented to Learner-Goal-Oriented Learning* / Through needs assessment and feedback, a trend has begun wherein teachers are realizing the necessity for learner- directed goals.

3. *Teacher Education* / In order to meet the needs of "media influenced" learners, new types of teacher education programs have been implemented. There is a trend, for example, toward requiring specific media competencies in educational training programs.

4. *Increased Use of Technology* / Inherent within the development of mass media is the naturally increased use of both software and hardware in educational situations.

**CAPABILITIES**

As has historically been the case, education is in a position to take advantage of the technology developed to satisfy demonstrated needs in another area. At this time that area is commercial communications. The technology for this endeavor was developed in accordance with specifications demonstrated by need. As a result, while the capabilities are excellent for the desired applications, they require modification and innovative thought before they can be successfully applied to education. Educators must exercise caution in any attempted application of this or any other technology not specifically designed for education. Technology now outstrips imagination. Innovations are in search of application. For this reason, many are quick to apply the new only for its newness. As a result applications are often designed for an educational use in areas where no need has been demonstrated. This approach guarantees failure, failure which is usually blamed on the technology.

Education should be the highest form of human communication. It is for this reason that the technology which facilitates lower forms of communication has not satisfactorily been adapted to education. Learning requires a two-way, interactive, and in some ways, directive discourse between a learner and something or someone. As the technology of communication comes closer to providing the means for such discourse, it will become easier to correctly adapt such means to education.

Three new capabilities of mass media are now emerging. These capabilities, if developed, will bring mass communication closer to this end. They are: Participatory or two-way communication, economical multichannel systems, and computerization of mass communications interactions. Rather than attempting to delineate any present specific technology or hardware capabilities, these areas will be addressed in regard to their potential future impact.

Of the three capabilities, the first, the ability to interact with the medium, is the most significant. Improved distribution and computerization serve to make this possible. This discussion, therefore, will relate the last two capabilities to the first which they facilitate. The exception to this is that satellite distribution, which is felt to be the system that will dominate all delivery means in the future, will be treated separately because of its importance.

Whether that entity with which the learner interacts provides that learner with direction or information to aid the learner in proceeding in his/her chosen direction, the entity must provide feedback as to the condition or desire of the learner. At a basic level, the combination of the three capabilities provides this feedback by allowing the learner to respond, or initiate a request from a terminal over a separate identifiable channel (managed, recorded, and/or acted upon through computerization). As mentioned earlier, it has been the emerging sophistication of distribution systems and computerized communication which has allowed this participation.

In addition to satellite distribution, the relatively expensive cable system and the adaptation of existing telephone lines currently provide the capability for participatory media. Each has its limitations. The fact that cable will probably remain economically unfeasible in areas of low population density will mandate its decline. Telephone line distribution, because of its presently deployed, wideranging system (96 percent of all households), does not face such a handicap. Its drawback lies in its inherent inability to transmit motion video. This inability can be overcome through modification by the addition of optic fibers to telephone lines. This, however, would rival the cost of cable distribution. But, without such modification, two-way, non-motion-dependent communication of print, visuals, and electronic data will increase.

Regardless of the distribution system over which a message travels, two-way communication is only possible if that message is received, analyzed, and, in some way, responded to. By

definition mass communications are disseminated from few to many, quickly. Interactive mass communications requires that the many respond to the few and that the few react to each individual response. Enter the computer. Properly programmed it can route and even respond to such masses of messages. And, more importantly, it can on an individual basis sort the data produced by all discourse which it has had with each individual.

None of this technology will receive wide application unless it becomes cost-effective. Miniaturization will enable computerization to do that. The use of satellites will do the same for distribution.

During the past two decades an economically feasible, effective, multichannel distribution system was developed—the communications satellite. Communications satellites have had phenomenal growth. Usually seven to ten years is considered a reasonable period for the maturation of a generation of a complex technology. However, four generations of satellites have matured in less than 20 years (Edelson, 1975). Today, from the frozen wastelands of the far north and south poles to the remote regions near the equator, the world is being made more accessible through the use of such satellites. In the process, nations, individuals, and groups of learners around the world are being linked together for the first time. Developed and developing countries are using satellites to handle many of their educational and communications requirements.

The satellite frees individuals from the classroom. It has made it possible to deliver information to individuals and groups cost-effectively. This is especially true for remote and rural populations.

In addition, satellites can provide for two-way communication with a learner or a group of learners and becomes a source of communication through the use of home satellite antennas which are capable of sending and receiving discrete and identifiable bits of information.

With the coming of the fifth generation of satellites, accommodating greater channel capacity and reduced cost per ground station, one can see an increasing use of satellites over ground lines.

Together these capabilities of two-way communication, economical distribution, and computerization will accelerate those trends previously enumerated. And, more significantly, they will facilitate the accomplishment of those ends which will be further discussed.

## LEARNER CAPABILITIES

Once we have considered the trends we must deal with, and the capabilities we have to work with, we must then consider what it is we want to achieve. Only when we determine what we desire can we realize our goals.

In order to cope with the demands of the future, the educational system in the year 2000 must work to provide tomorrow's learners with certain basic capabilities, which will be discussed in terms of both the affective and cognitive domains.

It may be trite but none the less true to say that change is a constant. If so, then learning, too, must be a constant. The individual in the year 2000 must be a lifelong learner. Change may not be new in itself, but the snowballing effect of change has been brought about to a large extent by the mass media. Because of advances in the mass media, more information reaches more people at a faster rate than ever before in history. For example, one of the effects of such ongoing change can be seen in a trend occurring in our economic environment, specifically in the employment market. Mid-life career changes, once rare, are now common. It is very likely that mid-life career changes will become a given. In order to be a productive member of society for a lifetime, an individual will not only be making more career changes, but will have to continually keep up with changes in the employment field. This will require a willingness to pursue continued education as well as open access to education for all ages.

Another trend affecting the need for lifelong learning is the increase in leisure time. As previously mentioned, the technological advances have given us more time for leisure activities. Is it unrealistic to presume that tomorrow's learners may turn to education strictly for fun?

Another affective skill required in the year 2000 will be a general appreciation of the democratic process. The trend toward computers, microforms and other technologies has resulted in an increasing centralization of information. Accompanying the tendency toward centralization of information is the centralization of power and control. The intervention of government agencies coupled with ownership of media in an increasingly limited number of hands might foretell a dangerous situation. Individuals can protect themselves only if they have a society of

people who are willing to speak out, listen, and exercise leadership. For instance, more and more special interest groups are gaining access to the broadcast media in order to present diverse concerns.

Cognitive skills related to an appreciation of democracy and political structure would include such attributes as the ability to plan creatively and make decisions. In order to make democracy work, citizens must exist who can devise new ways of thinking about the old, who can come up with original ideas, and who have the ability to see things from a variety of perspectives. Perhaps this might counter the trend in the political environment toward more federal control.

The snowballing change will also require individuals to develop better coping skills. Plan as people might, it will be necessary to learn to deal with the unexpected. Otherwise, the world is in store for more frustrations and disappointments, not less.

Another effect of the mass media is a trend toward depersonalization. Mass media, by their very nature, speak to the masses, not the individual. Education must prepare the individual to be better equipped with interpersonal skills in order to counteract the depersonalizing effect of interacting with media instead of people. Another sociological attribute of the individual in the year 2000 is the necessity to develop an appreciation of human worth. This implies greater self-awareness and the ability to "walk a mile" in someone else's shoes. The mass media emphasize the similarities between people. Dialects and even entire languages are disappearing. People are encouraged to dress alike, join the "Pepsi generation," be young, and use Crest. Education must counter this effect by encouraging individuality and the appreciation of individual differences.

The change brought about by the mass media has caused an information explosion in all four areas—the political, the socio-cultural, the educational, and the economic. Certain cognitive skills need to be developed to help people deal adequately with the information coming forward from the four areas in the global home. In the year 2000, isolated facts will have little meaning because new information will always be coming in. What are needed instead of memory skills are improved information retrieval skills, which would allow finding the information efficiently and effectively.

Another important skill is the ability to discriminate between relevant and irrelevant information. Not only must people be able to find information quickly, but they must be able to find the best information for their particular purpose.

Accompanying discrimination skills are synthesizing and generalizing skills. In order to maintain relevance, there must be a clear idea of how information fits into the larger suprasystem.

In short, the learner of tomorrow must be a responsible, future-conscious, and creative individual. He/she must have the skills which will enable him/her to cope, plan, and make decisions. This implies a confident, adaptable person who is aware of his/her own worth and the worth of others.

**Facilities**

Considering the architectural concept that "form follows function," what will the "little red school house" of the year 2000 look like? Based upon the anticipated changes in the process of learning and expected outcomes of learning, the structural environment is slowly but significantly changing.

The "little red school house" will no longer have a brick and mortar facade because permanence is no longer a criteria of construction. The centers of population shift too quickly in a highly mobile society. Brick and mortar cannot be readily adapted for the technological capabilities which are being introduced on the educational scene with increasing rapidity. Sizes and shapes of spaces need to change constantly to adapt to the variety of functions that take place within the facility.

The actual size of the educational facility may be much smaller than currently exists, not because fewer students will make use of it, but because of changes in the processes of learning. It may serve more as a kind of "command headquarters" housing sophisticated electronic equipment which is capable of sending and receiving many messages. Learners in different environments can make individual educational choices at any time. A reduction in size may also be necessitated by the expected reduction in cheap, available energy in the year 2000. If energy is readily available, it may be prohibitively expensive. Students may then have to have communication/learning centers in their homes which would eliminate the need for expending energy to heat and cool large buildings or to transport learners to and from the facility.

Functions within the "school house" will be expanded in purpose and used by a larger

community. If, as has been said, persons are going to have to relearn a trade or profession approximately every 10 to 12 years, then the most logical focal point for this steady stream of adult learners is the existing educational facilities in the community—the "school house." This may not mean, however, that these adults will be physically placed in the building, but rather receive instruction in their home in one of a variety of formats being disseminated from the local school. The facility would be extended further to meet many purposes through systems of interconnecting networks which permit the accessibility and retrieval of an infinite amount of educational information.

**Programs and Practices**

The trend from teacher-goal-oriented instruction to learner- goal-oriented instruction should result in an instructional program which is truly learner centered. It should also be learner directed. If individuals need to become truly self- directed and responsible, they must develop the ability to assess their own needs and respond to them.

A self-directed person responding to a rapidly changing world must constantly continue the assessment and response process. This should result in the continuation of the trend toward an open, lifelong educational process. Changing careers, technological advances, and the need for particular skills will necessitate an education system which can be entered at any point in the lifecycle and left when a need is met. This type of system is less dependent upon required attendance and more dependent upon rendering services to all learners. The result of this change is a more humane, less structured environment serving learners of all ages and backgrounds.

The instructional program in this educational system will reflect the trend toward less expensive technology and commercially viable software. The media of the program will be the media of society. A reliance on printed material will probably be impractical and inefficient. The timelag between the writing of a work and its availability to learners is significant. Printed material is also costly, with little savings for mass distribution. Electronic media can be instantaneous. They can be distributed to even larger audiences with virtually no additional cost and lend themselves to numerous applications. The availability of electronic media also provides the learner with a choice of information sources which can assist in compensating for various cognitive styles and learner preferences.

The political considerations involved in controlling the content of mass media will make it continually more desirable for special interest groups to provide software for instruction. This should enable the educational system to obtain extensive holdings of instructional software at a reasonable cost, and even to assure that all points of view are represented.

The trend toward the reduction of teachers, which reflects the changing patterns of instruction, should continue and intensify as the role of the teacher changes. Teachers will not be able to serve as repositories and deliverers of education. The information explosion has rendered this role impossible and the development of information storage and retrieval systems has rendered it needless. A teacher in the year 2000 will do well to maintain a familiarity with the major sources of information and processes for obtaining information.

The revised role of the teacher should be that of resource manager and adviser to learners. The teacher will need an understanding of the learning process and a knowledge of resources. Group activities will be less prevalent and the focus of the teacher will be on service to the learner as opposed to the transmission of content to a class.

**SUMMARY**

The global home in the twenty-first century will exist in a mediated society. Media literacy will not be an academic issue. It will be a basic need for every citizen. It is not fair to society to permit education to languish in outmoded practices and beliefs. Education must reflect the capability of mass media and be reflected in the operation of mass media.

A new system must emerge, an educational system which accepts technological advances simultaneous with society's acceptance; a system which respects individuals and recognizes its ability and its duty to provide every individual with a meaningful and appropriate education at any time the learner has a need. This will require a concerted and concentrated effort heretofore unrealized in education. Those aware of mass media, its trends, and its capabilities must lead this effort. We have only one generation to go.

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# Conference Summary

Harold Hill

## GENERAL COMMENTS

It seems to me that there are perhaps four outcomes, or experiences, that we might look at as we explore what has been going on here for the past several days—things that you might feel are involved in your purpose in coming to this conference: (1) having an opportunity to relax, see old friends, make new ones, and enjoy a rewarding experience; (2) an opportunity to "rub elbows" with the people who have various leadership roles in the AECT, so that you can come to know them better and feel like you are more a part of the association; (3) a chance to sharpen your leadership capabilities and potential, because leadership does not often "just happen"—nor can we necessarily make a leader of someone who doesn't already have that potential—what we can do is nurture those innate leadership characteristics that some have, and refine leadership abilities; and (4) finally, we have come here hoping to explore some aspect of our field, or related conditions that affect it, and leave here with considerably more knowledge and insight than we had when we came. I would like to look at each of these four with you in an effort to sort of pull together just what went on in each of the areas. I may be a little more critical than some would hope, but, if I am, it is done in the hope of creating some more food for thought—even if angry thought.

## FUN AND RELAXATION

This is perhaps the easiest of the four areas to analyze. To put it simply, "yes," you did have fun, you did relax, you did meet old friends and make new ones—and new ones with a diversity of backgrounds and interests. We have delegates from most of the states as well as from Canada, Taiwan, Nigeria, and the Netherlands. We had a dispensary that never ran dry; a wine and cheese party; an evening of boat rides, melodrama, and disco; jokes in general sessions—some intentional and some not, some good and some bad; we had TV interviews when we arrived, our pictures taken to be pinned up on the "Okoboji Candids" board; we had midnight marauders almost every night—and far past midnight; a corn-eating contest; and we had the wildest pajama party— ongoing, and at all hours—that any teenager could ever dream of—beds on the lawn, beds in the dining hall, and men in President Marie McMahan's bedroom and bed.

So, I think your quotient on fun and relaxation is quite high, and I know from experience that you will look back on that part of our activities with fond memories and when you meet in New Orleans next spring, or at other conferences around the country, you will experience that warm glow that comes from fun experiences shared with friends.

## RUBBING ELBOWS WITH LEADERS

I think many of you will look back pleasantly at the chance you've had here to meet and talk with the likes of Marie McMahan, Bill Grady, Carolyn Skidmore, Howard Hitchens, Bill Oglesby, Ken Silber, Minaruth Galey, Barry

Bratton, and many others in the AECT. Hopefully, you have come to understand both the individuals and the machinations of the association a little better.

All of the foregoing activities are very important to the success of the conference, and, from my observation, they exceeded anyone's fondest expectation. We need to have the opportunity to relax, enjoy the pleasant surroundings and company, make new friends, play volleyball—all of that. But we need to be careful not to let those activities "take over" and dominate the conference. I'm afraid that that might almost have been the case a few times during the past few days—when folks were more interested in swimming than working on refining reports, or simply doing a little further reading and exploration on their own. Perhaps, next year's planning committee may want to give a little thought to that delicate balance needed.

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Over the years, Lee Cochran and others affiliated with this conference have emphasized the importance of advancing leadership development at Okoboji. As you know the word "leadership" is in the official title of the meeting. There are many ways to develop inherent leadership traits, to improve one's capability to function as a leader, and I won't take your time to go into detail about that this morning; but I do want to spend a few minutes on the leadership potential of this conference.

Obviously, leadership maturation is impossible until the individual has developed certain personal skills and knowledge that will permit him/her to be willing and able to stand up for what he/she thinks is right and able to discuss his/her position intelligently and persuasively. We must be able to understand, appreciate, and use confrontation. But that seems to be becoming more and more difficult. Too often, we are told "don't make waves," or "don't raise a fuss." Dr. Wayne Dyer, in his book *Pulling Your Own Strings*, says, "Behavior is the only way to teach others not to bully you. By standing up and taking that risk . . .you send out a message that you aren't interested in being bullied, and that you won't take it." And, in discussing those who tell you not to make a scene, he says, "This tack is used to get people to behave in self-forfeiting ways, rather than effectively, because the speaker can't stand public confrontations. It is used especially to teach young people to put more stock in what others think—which ultimately helps them to distrust themselves . . .have low self-esteem . . .."

This conference offers us an opportunity to share ideas, to discuss them, to debate them, and, yes, to have confrontations over what we believe. Not to take advantage of that opportunity deprives us of a real chance for personal growth—a chance to get some of our rough edges ground off in meaningful argument, a chance to nurture at least one of the very vital attributes of leadership.

The discussions and slight arguments we had in our general sessions portion of this unfortunately were not about issues but about procedures. We weren't arguing about the theme or its ramifications, we were arguing about how we should *structure* the conference. Perhaps the decision to do away with any preliminary report sessions, during which we could argue about *ideas* and debate points of view and find out more about what some of the other delegates thought, deprived us of the opportunity for the type of professional growth and leadership development I have been talking about.

Of course, the small groups give some modicum of opportunity, but it is not the same thing. As Barry Bratton said to me the other evening, "In the small group one forceful, or even simply loud individual can easily dominate. In the larger group that is virtually impossible." And, as I travelled from group to group to observe both the leadership development evolution, as well as to learn more about the content you were developing, I found that to be true in too many instances—not all, perhaps, but certainly too many. The very people who should be getting the most from the Okoboji process were abrogating their rights and privileges to those with perhaps a little more experience, a greater reputation, or simply just older. The young folks to whom we have to look for the real leadership in our association and profession in the coming years generally were not as actively involved as they should be. As I say, this was not always the case, but generally it was.

Perhaps the topic was seen as too general, or perhaps too "scary" for most to be able to really come to grips with—at least in front of a lot of people. Too many participants seemed to want to retreat to the safer ground of "theorizing" about the topic, or to discussing the tired, old system of trying to return to stereotyped AV application; rather than face the rather terrifying

aspect of dealing with what mass media are doing to society—good or bad—and how we, as educators, might utilize this powerful influence for our own ends. We often—not just here—tend to pontificate and dodge the issues, because we feel unsure about how to tackle the basic problems.

This is nothing but self-defeating, because education has been dodging the real societal issues for too many years. Mass media are not going to go away; they are going to continue to have an impact on all of society, and perhaps education particularly. We must face the problem of the best possible utilization. People in general too often fail to, or don't want to, realize the world as it really is, preferring to live in their own little universe on the false theory that everything will work out all right. In his book, *Looking Out for No. 1*, Robert Ringer says, "The degree of complications in an individual's life corresponds to his insistence on dwelling on the way he thinks the world *ought* to be rather than the way it actually *is*." I'll talk about this a little more during my remarks about the content of our conference. Just let me say again that it is possible that our seeming unwillingness, at times, to face the real issues, to be willing to take part in confrontation, to avoid exposing our ideas in front of large numbers of people, may well detract to a considerable extent from developing the sort of individual traits almost necessary to leadership development. I honestly am not trying to be overly critical of the process you elected to follow, I am simply trying to get you to think about a few things, when you leave here, that hopefully will move you a little further down the trail of leadership. Of course, it's obvious that what I am saying is not applicable to all of you who have been doing these very things for years. I am speaking to those younger, potential leaders in our field who may not want to miss the growth opportunity another time. One caveat—it is often the responsibility of those "who have been there" to help the newer ones gain some of these experiences.

## THEMATIC CONTENT

As I turn to a discussion of the treatment of our thematic content, I want to make clear that I am not making any automatic connection between my concerns over the possible loss of leadership development gains because of the process you elected to use, and the end product of your deliberations as represented by the reports you presented yesterday. I felt they were generally pretty well done. I would say that they might have been somewhat better—or at least have represented to a greater degree a thorough discussion of various viewpoints—if there had been more opportunity for the entire group to critique the small- group efforts as they went along. But enough of that.

"Mass media have greatly depersonalized our society, changed our attitudes, and altered our values—generally not for the betterment of our society." That statement, excerpted from the concerns you prepared before coming here, and used by the Planning Committee in their presentation Monday evening, perhaps best typifies the general opinion of the delegates regarding mass media's impact on the teaching/learning process.

Now, looking at a rather typical concern on the second aspect, i.e., the role of the educational technologist regarding the future impact, we read, "The complete impact of mass media on learning in the furure is not known." In those two concerns, expressed by delegates, we pretty much have the crux of what this conference is all about.

Unfortunately, as I see it, the greatest part of the impact of mass media has been on the learner who has come to expect great things from the mass media—good production, excitement, challenge, imagination, beauty, thought provocation, etc.—and the formal school room and the instructor therein have failed miserably in competing. We have tried to compete in many ways, but we have failed in making use of the mass media already existing outside the school. We should take a lesson from the mass media rather than decrying their effect.

The educational technologist needs to accept a great deal of the blame for the failures indicated above. We need to do much more to help our teachers make use of the media available on the outside. I believe many of us realize that, as evidenced by some of what has been said and written at this conference. The concerns I quoted earlier reflect our perceptions before we came to this conference. Although our perceptions may remain much the same today, our general outlook on what to do about them is encouraging, it seems to me. It appears perhaps that these few days of intensive exploration have cast a different light on our perceptions. We seem to be willing to accept mass media in a somewhat different light, and we are owning up to the

shortcomings of education itself.

For example, in the "Mass Media . . .Education 2000" report, we find the following: "There has never been such rapid change in society; but even more significantly—there have never *been* many changes in education. We teach today in much the same way as did Aristotle, Plato, and even the Sumerians in 2000 B.C., oblivious to the fact that the world outside the educational islands has changed." They go on to relate societal changes with the need for changes in the way we look at communication—and communication is certainly what the mass media are all about, and what education *should* be about. They say: "Based upon rapid information transmissions, the ways in which individuals relate to each other are changing. Mass media have made people rethink and revise basic communication formats between individuals in order to further the 'let's really *communicate*' philosophy."

There can be little doubt that mass media have had a tremendous impact on the way society acts and reacts. Nick Johnson gave us several examples of that in his keynote talk—and many of those can be found in some of the group reports, along with some thoughtful perceptions. For example, the report on "Form and Content of Television Programming: Informal Learning," has the following statement: "Electronic media have replaced the home, church, and school as the preserver and purveyor of cultural values and in the socialization process. Television has taken over the mythic role in our culture. Soap operas, situation comedies, westerns, and melodramas are the folk stories and mythology of yesteryear that convey and reinforce the values of society. It is obvious that the programming of TV and the accompanying commercials transmit a large amount of information relevant to these values or world view."

While we know there is an impact, we can't be sure just how beneficial and how harmful it really is. Commercials, perhaps, epitomize the potential for impact, but are they greatly different in that regard than *Doonesbury*, for instance, or the often startling interviews in *Playboy*? We can't be sure about answers to any of these questions, because there has not been enough definitive research.

Incidentally, to digress for a moment, I had a graduate student who is receiving her Ph.D., who is basically a rhetorician, but, in her dissertation, wanted to combine that interest with media. So she did an in-depth, computer-assisted research project on verbal aggression in Saturday morning television. I mention this because one of her most disturbing findings was that most problems on Saturday morning television are solved by some divine intervention or lucky happenstance and almost never by confrontation. This is disturbing because children may well grow up believing that someone or something else will solve problems with no need for involvement, argument, or persuasion—in other words, they will avoid confrontation. We are already seeing this in our college students, as opposed to those of a few years ago. Most of our courses involve confrontation in some form—simply because viable communication nearly always does—and we are finding our students shying away from it, wanting an easy solution with the avoidance of any trace of conflict.

However, commercials on television quite often present conflict and can certainly cause internal conflict, and, perhaps, damage. For example, I have another student who plans to write a dissertation attempting to show that television commercials could conceivably literally destroy one's ego. Imagine the following scenario: A young man, rather plain looking, with a "zilch" personality and no friends, sees television commercials which tell him that if he uses such and such a deodorant, this shampoo, that aftershave, drives a particular car, and on and on; he will be a big success, pretty girls will flock around him (and don't blame me if commercials are sexist, I'm just reporting), and in short, life *will* be beautiful. And you know as well as I do that that is exactly what TV commercials are trying to lead us to believe. So, our hero tries all of these products and tactics, and still no one likes him, and he's not successful. What is the answer? He must simply be a failure as a human being? He has been programmed to believe what mass media tell him, so all of those commercials must be true; therefore, he personally is to blame. What can that do for an ego?

While that may sound a little fanciful, we do know that the mass media have an effect—and the research into this very matter may give us some interesting insights—if we can pull it off, and we know it's tough, maybe impossible. And you have worried about this "control" that the media have over society and its mores— this concern shows in your reports and your discussion of them—although I must say that I think you might have taken a somewhat more moderate posture if you had not so readily adopted Nick Johnson's philosophy. You have evidenced considerable concern over what the economic structure of the mass media may do to society because of the control factor. I don't believe Nick Johnson

objected to the economic support of broadcasting as it exists, per se, and he offered no real substitute for it. No, it's the control he is concerned about, and that is certainly prudent. And you should think about what would be the alternative if we didn't have the present democratic economic base for media. Government, meaning our taxes, certainly isn't the answer when we won't even urge proper tax support for the public broadcasting system in this country. If we had started that way, as most West European countries did it would be a different matter, but we didn't. So who's to control the system? It seems to me you would want to approach with caution the idea of taking controls away from such organizations as General Motors and the broadcast networks and turning it over to the Ralph Naders and Nick Johnsons. They have their own drives and desires, too, you know. And I certainly don't want the government to control what I see, hear, and read. Certainly we must become more politically active personally, professionally, and through our associations, as has been wisely suggested here by at least one group; but we need a great deal more in-depth study about the impact on product, and thus on us the consumers, before we run around touting any *particular* cause.

When you discuss the impact of media on society, and let's take television as a specific example, we have to ask the question, as I believe Nick did, whether television shapes or reflects society. This is very important, because if it reflects, then we have an even greater responsibility. There is considerable evidence to show that it both shapes and reflects, and I happen to believe that, although television may anticipate our society—that is, lead us a little bit by guessing. What would we be like even if television wasn't here to influence us? I believe we have a very great responsibility for what is on television. Again, look at the poor performance record of public television, generally, both in terms of financing and audience. That may well be our fault; it is certainly our problem and we'd better do something about it.

Speaking of responsibility, I am a firm believer in what has been expressed in one or more reports about using effectively what is available to us through the mass media. Since mass media are a way of life, we can't ignore them, and they won't go away. So let's take from the media those things we can use to reinforce whatever else we are doing. As TV critic Marv Kitman said on a program made for public television—a portion of which you saw in the background as one group's report brought you the commercial for the Apex bias straightener—"We need to utilize what's available by asking such questions as 'What would Fonzie do if he were in ancient Greece?'" because the kids feel he is really "in." Walter Cronkite, on the same show, suggested that teachers assign daily newscasts for kids to watch and then have a current events discussion the next day on topics covered in the newscast as well as those which weren't. He suggests the use of television programs and newspapers as texts for courses. Those suggestions may seem a little far-fetched to you, but they are certainly symptomatic of what we should be doing. We should teach learners to discriminate among the offerings of the mass media, but we shouldn't try to dictate to them what they should accept or discard; we should teach them to utilize the media to the fullest. You know our approach to media has been sort of like that old saying about the weather: "Everybody talks about it, but no one does anything about it." But, of course, we do DO something about the weather—we have heating systems to keep us warm, air-conditioning to keep us cool, we have raincoats, umbrellas, suntan lotions. And that's the way we should DO something about the media—learn to adapt, taking from the media the best things we can, discard those we don't need or want, and, most importantly, teach the students to do the same, hopefully by example in the classroom. But, in whatever way, teach discrimination in media content selection, learn to adapt existent mass media items to the lessons we teach, because, as I said before, mass media in some form will be with us, and we must learn to live with it, but more importantly, learn to live with it for mutual benefit. To this end, remember our responsibilities to the media, our responsibility to make society more like what we would like to have for our youngsters, and not blame media for what we may consider harmful changes in the way things are. We have never faced a tougher challenge, as media technologists, yes, but much more importantly as *educators* to whom future generations are entrusted for better or for worse. It is our society; we will be handing it over to them, mass media and all, and it is up to us to help them do a better job than we have done. And, most importantly, remember that mass media merely hold up a sharply focused mirror to man's natural weaknesses. If we seek to make mass media a special area of morality, requiring a greater dedication than we are willing to invest in private and professional life, we will fail both the mass media communication system and ourselves.